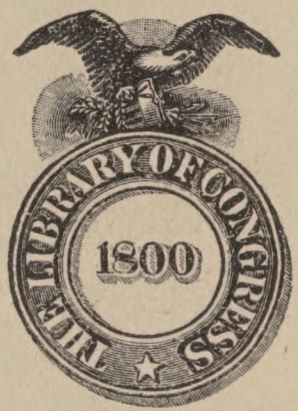

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THE

MONARCH OF MILLIONS;

OR, THE RISE AND FALL OF THE

AMERICAN EMPIRE.

BY

GROSVENOR WILSON.

THE NEELY COMPANY,

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DEDICATED TO

WILLIAM E. KISSELBURGH, JR.,

AS A SLIGHT TOKEN OF AFFECTION AND HIGH ESTEEM

FOR

AN AMERICAN PATRIOT.

IN LIEU OF PREFACE.

The chronicler of the momentous events of the summer of 1950 wrote what he fondly deemed to be a very fine, eloquent and philosophical preface. A Judicious Friend to whom it was submitted promptly consigned it to the waste-basket and handed to the chronicler in its place the following curious document, which has just (March 1st, 1951) come to light among the literary remains of a Distinguished Statesman who died in 1905. The document so found bears date of April 1st, 1900. The name of the deceased Statesman is withheld at present for family reasons. His remarkable utterances, shorn of much extraneous matter, and sternly condensed, are herewith put in print:

"In this spring of 1900 I see no hope for the continuance of the Republic of our fathers.

"Americans have forsaken their ancient ideals and are blindly worshipping material success.

"The worst, the grossest, the most ignoble of despotisms is the despotism of the dollar.

In Lieu of Preface.

"The so-called trusts sit in the seat of power.

"A government, republican in name but imperial in fact, will respect republican forms only so long as is prudent.

"When a man combining great wealth and great genius comes to the front he will find a nation trained to and ready for his yoke.

"A nation gets such governors as it deserves. Woe to the American people if they do not soon awake to the peril which threatens them from their own apathy!

"Cæsar absorbed Rome, Napoleon absorbed France; is it reserved for America to be absorbed by some multi-millionaire?

"I fear so.

"Wealth now rules through political puppets. It will soon discard them.

"I, as one of those puppets, write this secretly. I dare not publish it.

"I should lose my job."

Events have proved that these words were of a singularly Delphic or prophetic character. History tells us that the Distinguished Statesman *did not lose his job.* Further comment seems to be unnecessary.

WASHINGTON, 1951.

The Monarch of Millions.

CHAPTER I.

The morning of Saturday, July the first, 1950, broke over Washington in a sweet summer splendor that augured well for the success of the imperial anniversary. It was exactly one year since the illustrious Vangold had assumed the office and title of Emperor of the Americans. His sway extended over the entire North American continent, the Hawaiian Islands, the Bermudas, the West Indies, Cuba, the Philippines and American China. More than five hundred million subjects paid taxes to this great potentate, beside whom Cæsar and Napoleon, his prototypes, seemed but pigmies.

Washington bloomed in holiday gayety. Everywhere fluttered the imperial flag, with its golden dollars strewn on a silver background, at once an emblem and an inspiration. On all the public

buildings and on many of the private ones rose the standard of the Golden Hog, a work which made its sculptor immortal. This beautiful animal, selected after elaborate discussion as the national symbol, was represented in an erect attitude, with the head drooping and the snout apparently foraging for provender; but the chief artistic beauty lay in its tail. This miracle of genius was curled, as are most hogs' tails, but with a curl so aggressive, so suggestive, so imposing, as to waken the liveliest emotion in the beholder. Wonderful magic of art!

To the east of the Capitol lay the Field of Celebration, a park set aside for the pleasures of the nobility. About 10 o'clock two girls entered the field. One was Aurea, the other Xantha. Their dress indicated high rank. Both wore the flowing draperies of the period, falling from the bust in graceful and divided folds that allowed perfect freedom to the legs, without permitting more than an occasional glimpse of delicate silken hosiery. Their arms and breasts were bare, but almost covered with jewels; coronets of pearls nestled among the Grecian coils of their hair. Aurea was dark, tall and confident; Xantha fair, small and diffident. Being girls they talked.

"I am so afraid, dear, I shall make some blunder," said Xantha.

"Nonsense," replied her companion.

"Papa has been rich such a short time that I scarcely even know the duties of a Maid of Money."

"But you have travelled?"

"A little."

"Well," said Aurea, "our duties are precisely the same as those of Maids of Honor at other courts. The Emperor has simply substituted money for honor."

"That seems easy," Xantha remarked.

"It is easy; we attend on the person of his imperial daughter, the Princess Sapphire—the duties are light, the costumes provided free of cost—"

But Aurea stopped abruptly, and whispering softly to her companion, "Imitate me," sank quickly into a kneeling attitude.

A being—surely it were profanation to describe her as a mere girl—a being, then, entered the Field. Recall, if you can, the loveliest dream you have ever had; summon from your memory immortal lines wherein poets have sung of Helen, of Cleopatra, of Heloise; see again the faces Raphael drew, the forms that Titian imaged; do

all this and you will begin to have before you some faint, pale shadow of the beautiful, the glorious, the imperial Princess Sapphire. Clothed in dazzling white, and crowned with several million dollars' worth of diamonds, she advanced towards the prostrate Maids. But happiness did not dance in those mysterious gray eyes; there was even a melancholy drooping twist to the Greek knot of her golden locks.

"Rise, my Maids," she said to the kneeling girls; "homage does me no good this morning. I should prefer sympathy." The Princess spoke with a slight New York accent.

"Your Imperial Richness is sad?" asked Aurea.

"Sad is no name for it. I am miserable."

"What," said Xantha; "you, the richest of all?"

"Alas," responded the Princess, "I suffer from a grief before which money is powerless!"

"That hardly seems possible," murmured the innocent Xantha.

"Quite so," said the Princess, "but nevertheless such is the case." She relapsed into pensive and unusual silence, and rapidly scanned the horizon through a small field-glass that she carried. This astronomical diversion, however, appeared to afford her no relief, for, letting the

glass drop with an impatient gesture, she flung herself upon a convenient garden seat and appeared bored.

"Xantha, dear," whispered Aurea, "leave us alone. As an experienced Maid of Money I am not unused to this sort of thing."

Xantha departed.

Aurea approached the Princess. As she did so she took from her girdle one of those small electric sooth-alls which have so completely superseded the smelling-salts and similar devices of by-gone days.

"Useless, Aurea," said the Princess, rising. "I am not to be soothed. I am electrically beyond it. But I must, I will, have a confidant."

"Dear mistress," responded Aurea, "you know I am devoted to you completely."

"Last night, as I was about to retire," said the Princess, "I leaned upon my newest telescope, the one with a three-thousand-mile range. Chance, or was it fate? prompted me to look through it. In the middle of the field of observation, not far from Chicago, I saw an old-fashioned balloon. Strange and antiquated it looked among the swift air-ships, yet touched with the romance of the past. It interested me."

"I've seen one in the museum," interrupted Aurea.

"Bother the museum!" retorted the Princess, with a slight touch of exasperation. "This was a real balloon. Below it hung a car, and in that car—O Aurea! I cannot attempt to describe him."

"Him?" queried Aurea.

"Certainly him," answered the Princess. "What do you suppose I need a confidant for? O, Aurea, his face, his form! Simply divine. And the expression with which he seemed to look right at me—simply thrilling. My nerve barometer had for some time indicated an area of high amatory emotion. At that moment it exploded."

"Too much pressure?" asked Aurea.

"Doubtless," replied the Princess. "O, Aurea! it must be love. Love, as we know now, is purely a nervous affection, an exalted excitement of the sensatory system. The poets and novelists of old who wrote of the heart were idealists groping blindly in the obscurity of ignorance. Science produces the nerve-barometer and we emerge into the light of truth."

"True, indeed," said Aurea. "But what became of the balloon?"

"Alas," said the Princess, "the night grew cloudy and hid it from my sight. This morning it is not to be seen. But it—and he—must be near me for my nerves are actually responsive. If I touch anything metallic I do not merely sparkle, I positively blaze."

Aurea here started back with a slight exclamation of terror.

"Fear not," the Princess went on, "I am wearing my invisible glass chemiloon—I am quite non-conductive. Now, dearest, you know all."

"You have my deepest sympathy," said Aurea.

"Sympathy is all very well in its way," sighed the Princess; "but I crave something more tangible. Would you object, dear, to leaving me alone? Solitude, perhaps, is the proper thing."

"I will go at once," replied Aurea. "But remember it is nearly noon, when the imperial fêtes begin."

"I shall be notified," said the Princess. "I have about me my portable telephone."

With a deep reverence Aurea left the Field. The Princess Sapphire was alone.

CHAPTER II.

It grew to noon. The sun blazed bounteously, but did not heat the Field, for at properly selected points the electric cold-wave towers poured forth refreshing breezes, never allowing the temperature to rise above eighty degrees. From all directions swift air-ships were converging upon Washington, their warning trumpets ringing out faint aerial melody which blended with the strains of approaching but yet distant bands.

The Field commanded a fine view of the Capitol, which noble structure is worthy a description. The old Capitol had not been removed. Instead it was transformed. Around it from base to dome had been erected a spendid covering or shell illustrative of the power and glory of wealth. The columns now were of gold and silver, the friezes crusted with jewels of enormous size, which were arranged so as to make pictures or allegories of the triumph of money. The famous victories of the railroad lords, the oil lords, the coal lords, the wheat lords, the sugar lords and other heroes of the epoch were

fittingly commemorated. Above all rose the great dome, a marvel of burnished brilliance, flashing back the sunlight with dazzling effect. Crowning the dome was a colossal golden statue of the Emperor, leaning over a ticker, from which the tape appeared to be running. In the monarch's left hand was a telegraph pad, in the right a pencil. It was plain from his attitude that he was about to write an order. Nothing more characteristic could be imagined; nothing more life-like could be conceived. In this grandiose work American art of the twentieth century reached its apex and explained itself.

But on the morning of which we are writing our lovely Sapphire has no eyes for glorious scenes. She is absorbed in thoughts that bewilder her. That she, the daughter of Vangold, the heiress of limitless millions, should be sighing for something unprocurable seems absurd. Yet such is the case. What is she to do? She stamps her little foot in impotent rage, and her eyes are dimmed with tears. O, the pity of it! The first tears of royal wealth, the sad discovery that even the very rich are part and parcel of poor humanity. Dear reader of gentle feelings, must you not commiserate the unfortunate girl?

But suddenly mastering her emotion she stands

erect, defiant, and with a vague, sweeping gesture of her superb arms, breaks forth into impromptu blank verse. These mysterious lines seem to be forced from her by some impelling psychic power:

"O force invisible that sways the world,
Surcharge my veins with lightning, till my heart
Becomes a magnet of the highest grade
With power to draw toward me him I love."

The melodious cadence of her voice dies down, her eyes shine with strange radiance; her parted lips, her heaving bosom, her rapt attitude, all betray a condition of intense hypnotic effort. Above the line of her glass chemiloon it is even possible to detect little sparks dancing like fireflies amid the jewels on her breast. When, hark! the sound of hurried footsteps, a youth bounds upon the Field and runs toward her with arms outstretched; she sees him, she knows him; he clasps her in a close embrace, their lips meet in a delicious kiss, at once a climax and a promise, and once again for two enraptured mortals begins the enchanted drama that is played in the springtime of youth.

Sapphire was the first to regain self-control.

Gently withdrawing from arms that were loth to surrender her, she murmured,"Who are you?"

"Your adorer," replied the youth.

"Of course," replied the Princess, "that is self-evident. But how did you find me?"

"I cannot say," answered the youth. "I first saw your face in a dream about a month ago."

"And I first saw you in a telescope last night," said the Princess.

"Since that dream," the youth went on, "the sight of you has forever haunted me. In my distant forest home I have heretofore been counted a pretty fair shot, but latterly I have missed everything."

"How strange," she whispered.

"Not at all strange," said the youth. "It is impossible to take good aim when you see a lovely face dancing along the barrel of your rifle."

"I suppose it is difficult," said Sapphire. "What is your name?"

"Demos."

"Is that your given or your surname?"

"My only name."

"How singular," said Sapphire. "Where do you come from?"

"From Jones River, Alaska."

"What a long way off. And you came all the way by balloon?"

"Yes."

"And solely to seek me?"

"No," said Demos. "I cannot say truthfully that that was my sole purpose, though no doubt it was the more important one. In fact I have, perhaps, a sacred mission to perform."

"O Demos," she exclaimed; "a mission? Then you are not rich?"

"Certainly not," replied Demos. "My net assets are a balloon, one rifle, the clothes I stand in, a stout heart and a pair of strong arms."

"O horrible!" she cried.

"Horrible?" he echoed; "isn't that a rather strong way of putting it?"

"I cannot make it too strong," she answered. Then, examining him more closely than she had yet done, she said: "Demos, from your costume I am led to the terrible suspicion that you are a plebeian."

Demos was a tall, handsome youth of about twenty-two or three, with dark eyes and hair and of a graceful, manly carriage; but his attire was certainly far from fashionable. In fact, it was neither more nor less than the dress of a nineteenth century cow-boy. A wide sombrero,

a flannel shirt, a loose sack coat, trousers tucked into high boots made up a costume certainly picturesque enough, but wholly inelegant.

At the word "plebeian" a puzzled expression had come across Demos' face.

"Plebeian?" he said. "I don't understand."

"And O!" said Sapphire, "your very presence here is dangerous! The Field of Celebration is reserved for the nobility. There are severe penalties for trespassers."

"Nobility?" said the yet more puzzled Demos.

"Fly, dearest, fly, before the Emperor comes," she cried imploringly.

"Emperor?" he exclaimed. "Ah! I understand! And my mission must be fulfilled!"

"O, what is your mission?" asked Sapphire.

"To restore freedom to the American people," he answered.

At this remarkable statement Sapphire recoiled as if wounded.

"But you don't know who I am," she said.

"The goddess of my dreams!" he replied.

"Undoubtedly," said she, "but I am also the Princess Sapphire, the only child of the Emperor Vangold."

Demos in his turn experienced a severe shock. He looked at the lovely girl before him with

mournful tenderness, but with unflinching resolution. The word "dreadful" escaped his lips.

"But surely," she went on, "now that you know me your mission can be abandoned?"

"Impossible!" said Demos; "a vow to my father—"

"O," she interupted, "he will release you."

"Out of the question," said Demos. "My father is dead."

Sapphire was silent for a moment. Then with simple, royal frankness she went to Demos and threw herself upon his breast. He felt her arms about his neck, the wind blew little strands of her shining hair upon his face, her great gray eyes looked up into his, ardent, glowing, intoxicating. In the boldness of perfect innocence she became adorable temptation.

"Demos," she murmured, "am I not worth some sacrifice?"

"O, but my honor!" he cried, brokenly.

"Honor?" she repeated, with a little puzzled gesture, "cannot that matter be arranged financially?"

At this critical point of their interview the lovers were interrupted. Unnoticed by them a man had entered the Field. From the splendor of his costume he was evidently a personage of great

dignity. He was a large, fair, fat man of perhaps fifty years, with a broad, chubby, good-natured face, with twinkling eyes that glanced kindly enough from the little valleys of flesh in which they were set; a nose of the pug variety, and a wide mouth revealing powerful teeth. He was smooth shaven, with the exception of short, close-cut side-whiskers that enhanced the square effect of his appearance. Upon his head was a species of helmet surmounted with a small pig. He wore a close-fitting coat, reaching to the hips, and covered with fantastic embroidery; tight breeches, silk stockings and pumps. Over all was hung a cloak of cloth of gold. He carried a staff or wand of office. This imposing being made hurriedly towards the lovers, with evidently hostile intentions.

Laying a powerful but respectful hand on Sapphire's shoulder, he said: "Surely her Imperial Richness is forgetting herself."

At his touch the Princess started away from Demos in lovely, blushing, maidenly confusion.

"And who are you, young man?" said the official to Demos.

"By what right do you question me?" asked Demos, haughtily.

The official laughed. There are several kinds

of laughter. A laugh may express pure merriment, or perfunctory assent, or incredulity, or positive scorn. The official laughter heard by Demos was decidedly of the scornful variety and aroused his wrath. He felt it necessary to assert himself. "Who are you?" he demanded.

"I?" said the official, with surprise; "I am the Imperial Swineherd."

It was Demos' turn to laugh, and he did so right heartily. The official stood aghast at this impertinence.

"That is a strange title to me," said Demos at last; "may I ask whose Imperial Swineherd?"

Now the Swineherd was a man with a vast idea of his own importance. To meet a person to whom he was unknown was a new sensation. Being of a good-humored temperament, and really pitying Demos' ignorance, he hastened to enlighten him.

"Young man," he said, "I am Imperial Swineherd to His Supreme Richness, Vangold, Emperor of the Americans. The poetic title of my office was suggested by the national symbol. I am next in dignity to the Emperor. In private life my name is Philip Porker. If you have any money to invest I shall be happy to give you a tip or two. My own immense fortune was accu-

mulated in the packing business in Chicago. Hence my family motto: "The Hog-pen is Mightier than the Sword." He paused, but Demos remained silent, whereupon he said sharply: "Now, sir, your business here?"

"I certainly have no money to invest," said Demos, "and my business is not for your ear."

"No money?" cried Porker; "a plebeian? and on the Field of Celebration, insulting the Princess? You are my prisoner, young man."

"He was not insulting me; how dare you!" exclaimed Sapphire. "Know, sir, that Demos is my psychic affinity."

"That is none of my affair," replied Porker, stoutly. "It is plain that his very presence here is a violation of the law, and I must arrest him. For aught I know he may be a very dangerous character."

"Constructively, sir, I may be your prisoner," said Demos; "but the practical question is, how are you going to take possession of me?" And as Demos looked very strong and athletic, there seemed to be pertinence to the point.

"Young man," said Porker, "I have but to touch a button and the Field will swarm with policemen."

"O yes, yes," cried Sapphire. "You must

offer no resistance, Demos. I will go with you. No harm can come to you, for I will never desert you."

"So be it," said Demos. "For your sake, dearest, I will go peaceably. Now, sir," turning to Porker, "I demand audience of your Emperor."

"And he shall have it," said the Princess.

"I shall simply discharge my duty by immuring you in a dungeon," said Porker; "the Emperor will attend to the rest. Follow me."

And with a stately stride, slightly marred by a tendency to waddle, Porker proceeded to leave the Field. Behind him walked the lovers, now thoughtful and silent, yet hand in hand, which afforded a certain consolation and aroused a certain hope.

The Field was left deserted, save for the butterflies that flitted from flower to flower and the birds that cooed and babbled in the trees, while overhead loomed the great image of Vangold, scanning the endless tape that ran from the giant ticker.

CHAPTER III.

Twelve silvery strokes rang out from the imperial clock. It was high noon. The countless air-ships, which had been hovering over the city like a flock of monstrous birds, dropped silently to their moorings, and Pennsylvania avenue was instantly packed with a dense throng of spectators. The imperial cortége was about to pass from the palace to the Field of Celebration. The palace occupied the site of the White House of former days, and fairly rivalled the Capitol in glittering splendor.

The Maids of Money, each escorted by a Noble, were the first to enter the Field, where they took up their station as a reception committee. The costume of the Nobles was similar to that of Porker, but not quite so rich and without the helmet. The guests of the day began to arrive. First came the Diplomatic Corps, headed by the Dean, the Ambassador from the Irish Republic. Then followed the Senators and Representatives of Imperial Congress and the Judges of the Im-

perial Court. As each body of dignitaries entered, the electric trumpets pealed out appropriate strains of automatic music. Miscellaneous Nobles with their families completed the assemblage. The event of the day was at hand.

With slow and stately mien the Cabinet, the official family of the monarch, immediately preceded his Supreme Richness. The Cabinet was composed of but four members, and each was styled a Secretary of State—one for Railroads and Mines, one for Grain and Pork, one for Oil and Cotton and one for Et cetera.

The one for Et cetera attended to all business not strictly pertaining to either of his colleagues. As the Cabinet appeared the vast throng began singing the National Anthem, which short and expressive hymn we herewith preserve for posterity:

Greatest, wisest, noblest, healthiest!
Boom! boom! boom!
All expressed in one word, wealthiest!
Boom! boom! boom!
Peal, O joy-bells! Wave, pavilions!
Boom! boom! boom!
God-like is the man of millions!
Boom! boom! boom!

The Monarch of Millions.

As the last sonorous "boom" triumphantly exploded the Emperor entered, and every man and woman present fell flat upon his or her face. In an equally reverent spirit shall we attempt to portray the illustrious sovereign.

Vangold was yet on the sunny side of fifty. He was of medium height, compactly built, and slightly inclined to stoutness. His features were ordinary in contour, and but for one most striking peculiarity he would have been physically a very commonplace person. This peculiarity, however, singled him out from the rest of mankind in a startling manner. He was of double complexion. The right half of him was extremely dark, the left half a ruddy blond. Half his hair was black, half sandy red. One eye black, the other blue. Olive skin met pinkish skin in the middle of his nose. His mustache also was parti-colored. Eminent physiologists explained this phenomenon satisfactorily. He was the direct descendant of two great families that first became conspicuous in the nineteenth century. On his father's side, of course, he was a Vangold; on his mother's side a Bilter-van. Paternally he inherited acquisitiveness and vast daring; maternally, the capacity to hold and hoard. Each strain of blood was too vigorous to

mingle with the other and so retained its individuality. Moreover, the physical phenomena were a faithful reflex of the imperial brain. In the monarch's immense operations in the national markets there was always the felicitous blending of boldness and prudence, cunning and conservatism. Even those whom he despoiled were forced to admire, while those whom he was occasionally obliged to enrich fairly worshipped him. He was, of course, too great to inspire affection, to which he was quite indifferent; but as a producer of fear he was unrivalled. Indeed, in early days, before his advent to the throne, he had once or twice been styled a panic-breeder. To sum him up in a phrase, he was Napoleon tempered with Jonathan Wild.

In honor of the day Vangold appeared in full regalia. Upon his head rested the imperial crown, a circlet composed of fifty-dollar gold pieces, supporting a double arch of priceless jewels surmounted by a miniature locomotive, which could be detached and used as a smoking pipe—a pretty illustration of the monarch's ingenuity and thrift. Up the middle of his coat ran embroidery representing a telegraph pole, from which diamond wires radiated, circling and recircling his person. The imperial breeches were

of silk, fashioned in perfect imitation of million-dollar bank bills, mixed together in artistic confusion. Purple stockings and scarlet pumps adorned the royal calves and feet. A cloak of spun gold hung from his shoulders with the imperial arms emblazoned in the centre—a bull and a bear fighting over a lamb, with the motto: "I Feed on All." His sceptre was severely plain, a simple rod of steel. An officer stood at his right carrying the Banner of the Dollars, another at his left uplifted the Standard of the Hog.

At an affable sign from the sovereign the prostrate Nobles rose to their feet, maintaining expectant silence. Vangold beckoned to his Secretaries, who approached him.

"Gentlemen," he said, "this is undoubtedly a holiday, but you know my maxim: 'Business before pleasure, business after pleasure, business during pleasure—in brief, business.'"

A respectful murmur ran through the assemblage.

Turning to the Secretary for Railroads and Mines the Emperor asked, "What is the latest from Wall Street?"

The Secretary, whose name was Pontmorgue, a pompous, florid gentleman, of ample proportions, hastened to reply: "Your Supreme Rich-

ness," he said, "there has been a sharp slump in National Electric."

"Hm!" said the Emperor thoughtfully. "I hold a large block of that myself. Wire at once that the Government will subsidize National Electric."

"Your commands shall be obeyed," said the Secretary, hastily taking his leave.

"And you, Mr. Blighter," said Vangold, turning to the Secretary for Grain and Pork, "what do you hear from Chicago?"

"They have a howling boom on in wheat," replied the Secretary.

"Indeed," said the Emperor. "Evidently they don't know I'm short of it. Send out a crop report at once that the crops will be just double that of last year."

"Your commands shall be obeyed," said the Secretary, as he disappeared.

The Secretary for Oil and Cotton, a thin, ascetic-looking person named Rockyfellow, was next interrogated. "What is the news," asked Vangold, "from Pittsburg and the South?"

"Your Supreme Richness," said the Secretary, "things are very dull that way. There is no news worth repeating."

"Hm!" said the Emperor. "Invent a few roorbacks and stir things up."

"Your commands shall be obeyed," answered the Secretary, and he too departed.

This left only the Secretary for Et cetera, a party by the name of Marcanna, of whom the Emperor made inquiry, "What have you to report, Mr. Secretary?"

"Same old thing," said the Secretary. "Complaints of excessive taxation, high cost of necessaries—"

"Tut, tut!" interrupted Vangold; "I can't be bothered that way."

"Then you have no commands for me?" asked the Secretary.

"No," replied the Emperor. "Stay, yes—send telegrams at once distinctly contradicting all the telegrams of the other Secretaries."

"Your commands shall be obeyed," said Marcanna.

And the last of the Cabinet vanished from the Field.

"Thus," said Vangold, with a majestic gesture and a pleasant wink, "thus I make my little combinations."

And the whole vast crowd, in an ecstacy of admiration, cried "Hail, all hail!"

"Thank you," said the Emperor. "I appreciate your homage at its full value. But this is a holiday and we must all be merry." In a practical, business-like way, he emitted an imperial laugh. Convulsive cachinnation at once swept over the throng.

"Very good, indeed!" said the monarch; "that has a jovial sound. I suppose it is the correct thing. But where is our Master of Ceremonies, my Imperial Swineherd? My daughter, also, seems to be missing."

The words had scarcely left his lips when Sapphire, Porker and Demos entered the Field and came toward Vangold. At the sight of Demos the Emperor frowned heavily. The unconventional attire, the youthful beauty, the sinewy strength of the young man affected him unpleasantly. He seemed to feel a vague shrinking, a dim apprehension, a something akin to fear.

"Whom have we here?" he asked Porker.

"A prisoner of state," replied the Swineherd.

"The man I love," cried Sapphire, her eyes flashing with tender courage and loyal resolution.

"Approach!" said Vangold to the youth.

The young man stepped forward. His Supreme Richness and Demos stood face to face.

CHAPTER IV.

"Bow, fellow," said Porker to Demos.

"I bow to nobody," replied the young man, haughtily.

"O, Demos, remember he is my father," cried Sapphire.

"On second thoughts I will bow to him in that capacity," said Demos, suiting the action to the word.

"What is your name?" asked Vangold.

"Demos."

"Your occupation?"

"First, adoring your daughter; second, fulfilling a sacred mission."

The Emperor looked relieved and smiled.

"Never mind about the first," he said, "but how about the second?"

"My mission," said Demos, calmly, "is to restore freedom to the American people."

"What!" exclaimed the monarch, "you would overthrow me?"

"Since I find you an Emperor, your overthrow seems to be a necessary part of my programme."

"Tut! tut!" said Vangold; "the boy raves."

And a murmur of derision ran through the listening throng.

"My young friend," the Emperor went on, addressing Demos, "you seem to be astonished to find me in the imperial office."

"I am," said Demos; "I know nothing of American history since the year 1898."

"And how comes it that your education has been so sorely neglected?" asked the Emperor.

"I will tell you," answered Demos. "My father was a Populist."

"Ah," interrupted the Emperor, "an extinct species."

"In the year 1898, despairing of the future of the Republic, he removed to the banks of the Jones River, Alaska. For twenty-five years he dwelt in solitary happiness, his sole occupation the deliverance of doleful prophecies. At the end of that period he felt the need of an audience and married an Indian. I was born. From my birth my father devoted me to liberty. He educated me with the sole view of making me the savior of my country. As he had cut off all connection with civilization his information natu-

rally stopped at 1898. Upon his death-bed he swore me to my consecrated task. I am here. I find you, an Emperor; I observe many other strange things, from which I infer that my father's forebodings were true and that Liberty has perished. As an honorable man I must keep my vow and seek to destroy your empire."

"O, Demos, Demos!" cried Sapphire; "do you not see that you are breaking my heart?"

"Not at all, dearest," replied the young man; "the overthrow of an empire can be accomplished without much personal inconvenience to its rulers if they are open to reason."

Vangold yawned. His interest in Demos' rather lengthy remarks had grown fainter and fainter as the young man proceeded. Turning in a bored way to Porker he asked: "What is the charge?"

"Trespassing on forbidden ground."

"Let the customary sentence be imposed," said the Emperor.

"But, father!" cried the Princess; "you do not understand. Demos is my accepted affinity. To punish him is to punish me!"

"Nonsense," said Vangold.

"I implore your clemency," beseeched Sapphire; but the monarch remained inflexible.

"Refuse it"—and she snatched the diamonds from her head—"refuse it and I will fling these diamonds to the plebeians!"

"Come, come," said the Emperor in an alarmed tone, "it is really a serious matter with the dear child. I suppose she must be humored. Porker, will you kindly give notice that family affairs compel the postponement of festivities for a short while?"

At a few hurried words from Porker every phonograph on the Washington circuit gave voice to the monarch's order. The occupants of the Field withdrew to a respectful distance from the imperial party.

"Put those jewels back on your head, Sapphire," said Vangold, "and I will talk to the young man."

Sapphire hastened to obey. Glancing boldly at her father, shyly at Demos, a prey to conflicting emotions which heightened her color and quickened her breathing, never was she more distractingly beautiful. Demos looked at her and felt his resolution ebbing. Suddenly he caught her hands in his, and at the touch his nerves quivered—a rosy mist seemed to spread before his eyes—a moment more and his vows

had been forgotten, his duties abandoned—but the metallic voice of Vangold broke the spell.

"When you find it convenient to release my daughter," said the Emperor, "we will have a word or two together."

Angry at his own weakness, which we, however, deem more than pardonable, Demos parted from the Princess almost rudely.

"Young man," said Vangold, "I myself consider you an ordinary crank. You see I am frank. I always am. But my daughter takes an inexplicable interest in you. The vagaries of her sex are among the few things I cannot control."

"Sir, you insult me," interrupted Demos, hotly.

"O, no! I put the case plainly, that is all," replied the Emperor. "I never insult people; it is unprofitable. But to resume—my daughter is entitled to consideration. I will therefore deign to enlighten you as to our respective positions. Your father, no doubt, informed you of the financial revolution which began some fifty odd years ago in the then Republic of the United States. About that period wealth first became formidable. The absorption of railroads, telegraphs, mines, oil-fields and other great interests by a compara-

tively few individuals and corporations progressed rapidly, until the nation contained but two classes, the very rich and the very poor. Real estate, of course, gradually passed into the hands of the former, until the man who owns his own house or the farmer his own farm is a rare exception. The wonderful development of electrical inventions greatly facilitated the general movement by almost abolishing manual labor. Under the patent laws these inventions necessarily passed into the hands of a few corporations. Now centralization of wealth means centralization of power. When the war with Spain occurred, in 1898, there followed an immense increase of commercial activity, which was further stimulated by the partition of China, of which we got a good share. Cubans, Porto Ricans, Filipinos and Chinamen of course had to pay high for the blessings of American rule, which, like all good things, is costly. The power of the great trusts grew rapidly and splendidly. It reached beyond our old borders to such an extent as to compel Canada and Mexico to join us or be commercially choked to death. They of course submitted."

"Cowards," exclaimed Demos.

"O, no," replied Vangold, "there is no coward-

ice in accepting the inevitable. All men do it. But to resume: Governing West Indians and Asiatics was not only highly profitable, but it was also an excellent training for governing Americans. The Trusts learned how to squeeze the last possible cent out of subjects and how to apply the process to citizens. It is of course an axiom that 'who controls the pocket, controls the man.'"

"Suppose your pocket is empty," interjected Demos.

"Then you are beyond the pale of consideration," answered the Emperor. "We have no use for those with empty pockets. Such persons have to efface themselves or be effaced."

"O, infamy!" cried Demos.

"You are a very simple-minded youth," replied Vangold. "I will thank you not to interrupt me. The first organ of the old government to become completely revolutionized was the Senate. Even in your father's day it was already called the Plutocrats' Club. The Lower House began gradually to fill with men of wealth. Presidential elections became a mere question of the longest purse. The moneyed interests dictated judicial appointments. The old issues which were so fiercely argued out by our ancestors

faded from men's minds. How to get rich and how to stay rich became and are now the only important questions. To get rich is comparatively easy. To stay rich is more difficult. The solution of the problem was measurably found in the union and league of wealth. That union was perfected by the creation of the National Money Trust, a secret association to which all millionaires must in self-defence belong, and which controls, as it sees fit, by a majority vote of its executive council, about ninety-five per cent. of all the money in the country. The immense power of this trust, long exercised unofficially, is now officially exercised under imperial forms. At last year's elections we bought sufficient votes to abolish the old constitution and ordain the American Empire. One year ago today I became the first occupant of the throne. I will ask my friend Porker to give you a few details of our form of government, which is very simple."

"With pleasure," said Porker, much flattered at being called upon. "We are divided into Nobles and Plebeians. Every man possessed of one million or more is a Noble with his immediate family. All below that sum are Plebeians. Every man possessed of over twenty millions, but

less than fifty millions, is a Representative or Senator. Men of more than fifty millions, but less than five hundred millions, are Imperial Judges. Men of over five hundred millions compose the Cabinet and the Imperial Council, the latter body having no limit as to numbers. The richest of all but one is the Imperial Swineherd —your humble servant. The richest of all is the Emperor. All minor offices are sold for cash at auction to Nobles only."

"Admirably and lucidly explained," said the Emperor. "You see under our system there can be no mistakes. You make a million and become a Noble. You lose it and you are again a plebeian. No personal titles are used; only official ones. As for freedom, we are the freest of the free. Any man can become Emperor by making more than any other man. I will acknowledge, though, that when the imperial office is in the hands of the right party it is a difficult job to get ahead of him."

"An exceedingly difficult job," remarked Porker.

"Now, young man," resumed Vangold, "admitting for the sake of argument that my daughter is smitten with you, you will see how ridicu-

lous it is for you to aspire to her unless you have at least a million. How are you fixed?"

"I do not own anything," said Demos.

"So I judged," said the Emperor. "Young men with whom one's daughters are smitten seldom do. But I am a clement person. Strange to say, certain natural emotions survive in me. For example, I love Sapphire, and I am willing to stretch a point to accommodate her. I will give you until the first of August in which to accumulate a million. Do so, and you shall have Sapphire. Fail to do so, and I shall feel it necessary to remove you by the latest electric process."

"O, father!" cried Sapphire.

"Enough," said Vangold. "I have gone a good way already."

"Young man," he continued, addressing Demos, "pledge me your word to appear before me on the first day of August to render an account of yourself, and you may meanwhile enjoy perfect liberty."

"There seems to be no impropriety in that," said Demos. "I pledge you my word."

"I might add," remarked the Emperor, "that in these days of air-ships and electric communications escape is practically impossible."

The youth frowned haughtily as he replied:

"There need be no mention of escape. My word is unbreakable."

"I should prefer bail," was the imperial comment, "but of course you cannot procure it. Porker, let the festivities proceed."

"One moment, please," said Demos. "I consider it only proper to inform you that I shall not devote the month you grant me to money-making, but to your downfall."

"Tut, tut," answered the monarch, quite affably; "that doesn't worry me in the least. You have no idea how many have tried it before you. The county poor-houses are full of them."

Vouchsafing no further remarks, and either not noticing or not caring that his daughter did not follow him, the Emperor, with Porker, moved off to start the festal rites. Again the clear voices of the phonographs were heard proclaiming now the beginning of the celebration. From a thousand electric automata arose the stirring strains of the imperial march, everywhere fluttered the Banner of the Dollars, everywhere glittered the Standard of the Hog. Amid the servile homage of his subjects Vangold walked slowly through the Field, calm, confident, triumphant, panoplied in the power of his countless millions, secure in his ability to buy and sell.

The Monarch of Millions.

O, kings and warriors of old! Ye who swayed with the sword and the cannon, whose glory was measured by the death and devastation that ye spread, how small, how dwarfish ye appear beside the illustrious Vangold! Wisdom, bravery, genius, patriotism, all the virtues heretofore prized by men, he estimated simply at their market value. His system was built upon the primal instinct of human nature, the mainspring of all action, the desire to have and hold. Mighty monarch! On this, thy festal day, the world salutes thee.

CHAPTER V.

"Come," said Sapphire, leading Demos from the Field by a private exit, where she thought they could be alone. They passed through a small gate which opened on an enclosed pathway leading to the palace, and which was for the sole use of the imperial household. As she expected, no one was in sight. The reaction which follows intense excitement now overcame the Princess. She grew pale and weak, and but for Demos' supporting arm she would have fallen. Alarmed at this distressing sight, Demos clasped her to his breast with confused terms of endearment and passionate protestations of devotion. Nor did he stop at words, but administered that other form of consolation which young lips so aptly practice. Under this vigorous treatment Sapphire revived and even returned his kisses. For a few rapt moments the lovers forgot all save the bliss of companionship.

"O," cried Demos, "if it could be thus forever!"

"It can be so if you will," murmured the Princess. "You have but to make a million. That cannot be so difficult. Father habitually does it."

"That is not the point," said Demos gloomily. "I am a consecrated person."

"And you will pursue your mission?"

"I must."

"And sacrifice me?"

"No; I must find a way to fulfill my vow and win you at the same time."

"Impossible," said Sapphire, sadly. "My father is all-powerful; nothing can prevail against him."

"Then I must fall, but at least I can fall hard."

"O, Demos, there is a way out of it. Let us fly! Take once more to your balloon. I will go with you."

"Dearest," said Demos, "I could never consent to such a plan. It would be dishonorable. Moreover, it is impracticable, as my balloon is pledged as collateral at my boarding-house."

"But I have ample funds."

"No, no," interrupted the young man, haughtily, "I could not accept the money of your father."

"Then all is lost!" cried Sapphire, wildly. "O, is there no help?"

"There is," said a hoarse voice at her elbow, and a man emerged from behind a tree where he had evidently been listening to the conversation of the lovers.

It was impossible to guess his age. He was short, fat and dirty. A straggling, frowsy beard covered his face up to the eyes, which were small and squinting. One jaw was misshapen, as if pulled awry. His hair needed cutting and hung over his neck in greasy wisps. He wore a peaked cap, a green blouse, striped trousers and heavy boots. No suggestion of linen was visible. He was an unclean thing. The lovers instinctively shrank from him.

Not at all put out by the impression he produced he took from his mouth a huge pipe he was smoking and repeated, "There is help, and I am the party to apply to."

"What are you?" asked Demos.

"I am an Anarchist."

The lovers shuddered. The Anarchist grinned. He enjoyed their disgust.

"I make my headquarters in such lager-beer saloons as provide free lunch. The only work I ever do is to manufacture bombs for other fellows to use. When they use them I get under the bed."

"Why are you an Anarchist?" asked Demos.

"Because I haven't got a cent."

"May I ask your name?"

"Bill Boneyard, the terror of tyrants."

"O, heavens," cried Sapphire, "the editor of the *Dryheat?*"

"The same."

Demos, of course, had never heard of the *Dryheat* or its renowned editor. He naturally felt a certain curiosity regarding him.

"Would you object to favoring me with your principles?" he inquired.

"Certainly not. I want liberty—ample, limitless liberty. Liberty to smash, to burn, to kill those who won't support me. I loathe labor, because nature gifted me with a lazy temperament; I despise law, because judges invariably rule against me; I hate property with a deadly, undying hatred, because I own nothing."

"You hold very radical views," said Demos.

"I do. So do you."

"I?" asked Demos.

"Yes. You wish to overthrow the government. I am perennially in the same conditon. Accept my aid."

"O, Demos," cried the Princess, "spurn his offer."

"Dearest," said Demos, "have I the right, in the peculiar circumstances of my position, to spurn any offer?"

No one noticed that Aurea had entered the pathway and joined the group. She now gently touched the Princess.

"What, Aurea, you here?" asked Sapphire.

"O, dearest Princess," replied Aurea, "a series of thrills such as you spoke of this morning are making my heart go pitty-pat, pitty-pat."

"Then, alas, dear, you too love."

"Yes," said Aurea, indicating the Anarchist, "him."

"Me? What luck!" said Bill.

"O, impossible!" said Demos.

"Quite impossible," assented the Princess; "look at him."

"I'm not the first Anarchist that young women have fallen in love with," growled Bill.

"Moreover," said Aurea, plaintively, "love does not depend upon one's outside."

"In a general way that may be true, dear," said Sapphire. "But such an outside!"

"I shall certainly try to stifle the feeling," said Aurea, "but I fear it will be too much for me."

"Just let me know when you have got through

trying," sneered the Anarchist, with a thoroughly repulsive leer.

"But, dearest Princess, forgive me," said Aurea, "I was sent to find you. The Emperor commands your instant attendance at the celebration. Your part of the programme is reached."

"O, I cannot go," cried Sapphire.

"My love," said Demos, "I think you should. You have at present certain official duties to perform. I think it is the correct thing to attend to them."

"Do you really think so?"

"That is my way of looking at it," replied Demos.

"Your way is probably the right way. I will go," said Sapphire. "When shall we meet again?"

"At the first possible moment."

Sapphire removed a small portable telephone from her girdle. "Take this," she said, giving it to Demos. "I have the duplicate at home. They are magnetized identically alike. You can call me up at any time, wherever you may be."

"O, wonderful!" cried Demos; "without wires?"

"Certainly," said Sapphire, "wires were dispensed with long ago."

"Sweet gage of love," said Demos, fondly kissing the telephone, "never will I part with it."

"I should think not," observed the Princess, as he carefully hooked it in a button-hole.

Then came a moment of mingled agony and delight when the lovers said their first good-bye. The Anarchist wished to indulge in similar farewells with Aurea, but that young lady informed him that she was still trying to stifle her feelings and could, therefore, permit no familiarities. The last good-bye was said, the last kiss exchanged. The Princess and Aurea re-entered the Field, while Demos and the Anarchist scaled the wall of the pathway and made toward the city.

Demos mused over the events of the day, of the mighty empire he had invaded single-handed, of the impossible task set him by the Emperor, of the yet more impossible task set him by himself, but more than all of a gracious face with radiant eyes that beamed affection, and rose-red lips that murmured hope. Dwelling on these thoughts he felt his courage rise, and he marched on the city, that lay beneath him, with the air of a conqueror. The sound of his companion's rasping voice roused him from his reverie.

"Can you lend me a quarter?" asked the Anarchist.

"No, I can't."

"Broke?" was the laconic question.

"Broke," was the laconic answer.

The Anarchist said no more. It seemed to Demos that a rude hand had brushed the charming visions of his fancy, that the gay summer sunlight was blotted with a huge stain. He looked about him and above him. He stood in the shadow of the image of Vangold.

At that moment the tiny bell of his telephone rang. He lifted the instrument to his ear and heard the voice of Sapphire say, "I love you."

CHAPTER VI.

The boarding-house at which Demos had chanced to put up was a very modest place, situated over a roomy lager-beer saloon. It and the saloon were kept by an elderly widow named Emma Liebotshœner. She was the relict of a distinguished Anarchist who had amassed quite a comfortable fortune catering to the thirst of his co-patriots, and she retained a sentimental respect for the departed's opinions, which made all Anarchists feel at home beneath her roof. When Demos entered, accompanied by Bill, the strangely assorted pair received a warm welcome from the hostess and a prompt invitation to a free lunch. Urged on by Bill, who set a stalwart example, Demos did full justice to the meal, and thus invigorated, felt ready to discuss the future.

The plan of campaign which he unfolded to the Anarchist was very simple. It was to preach the propaganda of liberty far and wide, to appeal to the patriotic instincts which he was sure were not dead, but only dormant, in the popular heart. These views were altogether too mild to

suit Bill, who dilated warmly on the efficacy of dynamite, and who generously offered to furnish a gross of bombs to be exploded by Demos at fitting times and places. To these suggestions, however, the young man turned a deaf ear.

"My idea," he said, "is to convince the nation that liberty is preferable to riches."

"What can be more convincing," asked the Anarchist, "than blowing up millionaires?"

"Possibly so, to those blown up," said Demos, "but you could blow up only a limited number, and the great majority unblown would, I think, be rather exasperated than otherwise."

"Bosh!" cried Bill. "Keep your explosions going at regular and stated intervals, according to advertisement, and you'll have 'em scared to death in a week or two."

"It does not seem to occur to you," said Demos, "that before the expiration of the week or two some powerful person, let us say a policeman, might lay hands on the exploder!"

"Ha, ha!" laughed Bill, "doesn't it occur to me? That's the very reason I never explode myself. But I'm always ready to give my immoral support to others." And in his enthusiasm he accidentally drank a glass of beer which the landlady had set before Demos.

Unshaken by Bill's eloquence, the youth determined to follow his own plan, for the present at least. The first thing to do was to obtain possession of his balloon. The widow was called in and the matter talked over. Now widows, however elderly, are proverbially susceptible to manly charms, and it was soon arranged that Demos should be allowed to take his balloon, with the understanding that he would settle his small account when convenient. She declined peremptorily the offer of a promissory note with Bill's endorsement, but perhaps this was because Bill had suggested making the note for a slightly larger sum than the amount due, the balance to be received in cash.

Demos was now ready to start. He took leave of the Anarchist, shaking him warmly by the hand, and saying: "You will understand, of course, that I utterly abhor you and your shocking views, but I realize that a crisis may arise when even your detestable methods may be salutary. I sincerely hope not. In any event, I will see you later."

"As to abhorrence, I'm used to it," replied the Anarchist; "it cuts no figure with me. Fire ahead; you'll come to my shop sooner or later. Vive la Commune! Hoch die Anarchie! Hur-

rah for dynamite!" Thus he roared his polyglot adieux to Demos, whose balloon shot gracefully upwards.

Leaving Bill to his pipe and such malt liquor as may chance his way, we will follow the flight of the balloon.

Demos' trip from Alaska, owing to weather conditions, had been at an altitude which afforded no opportunity for inspecting the country. He was now delighted to find that he could make good headway at a moderate height. He shaped his course north by east, bound for New York, and gave himself up to the pleasures of observation. One thing immediately struck him—the entire absence of smoke. He did not know that the generation of heat by electric process had superseded the use of coal. As he swept over mile after mile of farm lands he was astonished to see scarcely anyone at work. In fact, each farm was fitted with an electric plant, and operations were carried on from a central station. Plowing, sowing, reaping and all other processes were conducted by the simple means of pressing the appropriate button. Weather plants were also in operation, producing as needed the requisite amount of snow, rain, heat or cold. It was harvest time, and on farm after farm Demos

witnessed the automatic gathering of the crops, while the farmer and his family in gay summer finery indulged in out-door pastimes.

"How beautiful it would be if they were free," mused the youth, and his heart swelled with rage at the thought of Vangold, that spider in the centre of his enormous web, fattening on a myriad flies.

Railroads ran in every direction, crowded with freight trains. The cars were engineless, the rails themselves being charged with motive power. There were, of course, no passenger trains, travel being conducted entirely by air-ships. The air-ships were, perhaps, the greatest source of wonder to Demos. They were of two kinds, the large public ships, carrying some hundred passengers, and the smaller private ships, which varied in size and capacity, the smallest accommodating but two people. All were built on the same model. The hollow, cigar-shaped hull was made of the thinnest aluminum and hermetically sealed after being filled with a volatile but powerful gas, which served two purposes. It enabled the hull to withstand the pressure of the atmosphere and at the same time gave it the buoyancy necessary for floating. The patent which covered the manufacture of this gas was

the most valuable in the empire. On the top of the hull and overhanging it was built a glass car, which was air-tight when closed. The motor was placed in the rear or stern, occupying but very little space. The car was plainly furnished with chairs. From either side of the hull spread revolving flanges, of a patent material, exceedingly thin and tough, which when in motion whirled with incredible rapidity. The steering apparatus hung below the stern. Magnetic balances kept the ship steady and in correct position. No arrangements for eating or sleeping were necessary, as the ships could maintain a speed of one hundred miles a minute. One of the smallest of the ships, which had been hovering about the balloon for some minutes, now suddenly darted to its side and stopped.

Demos saw that its occupant was a young Noble. The Noble opened the door of his car and hailed the balloon. Demos courteously responded.

"Whither bound?" asked the Noble.

"New York," said Demos.

"What kind of a craft do you call that?"

"This? This is a balloon."

"You don't say so. Never saw one before," said the Noble. "Some old family heirloom, I

suppose," and he eyed the balloon with great curiosity.

"It was my father's," said Demos.

"What will you take for it?" asked the Noble.

"It's not for sale," replied Demos. "I need it in my business."

"What is your business?"

"To restore liberty to the American people."

"O, come off!" said the Noble, "talk sense."

"Coming off would be a little awkward up here," said Demos. "I assure you I meant just what I said."

"But what has your balloon got to do with it?"

"I must have means of locomotion."

"All right. I'll swap."

"Swap?"

"Yes. My air-ship for your balloon."

"But I don't know how to manage an air-ship," objected Demos.

"Step right in and I'll show you in a jiffy."

Demos jumped into the car. The Noble closed the door and explained the simple apparatus to him. The movement of a small switch turned on or shut off the current of power. Another switch regulated the action of the rudder. A child could handle it. The car was fitted with maps, a barometer, compass, sextant and quad-

rant. Under the Noble's direction Demos took a spin of a few hundred miles and returned to the balloon in a most airmanlike manner.

"Is it a go?" asked the Noble.

Demos hesitated. It seemed to him he was getting so much the better of the bargain. The Noble, evidently an impulsive young gentleman, mistook hesitation for reluctance.

"I'll give you a thousand dollars to boot," he cried.

"O, I couldn't think of it," said Demos.

"Why not? I think it's a pretty good bargain for you." Then he added, slyly, "It might help you in your business."

"True," said Demos, gravely, "viewed in that light I think it right to accept your offer."

The Noble at once counted out a thousand dollars from his pocket-book.

"Put me on board," he said, "and show me how to work the old thing."

Demos accompanied him to the balloon, which he soon learned to handle. Our hero then took possession of the air-ship, and the two crafts parted company.

"Come, come," thought Demos, "this is a fair beginning. I can go where I wish and with

money in my pocket. The cause of Liberty is looking up."

Heading for New York, he arrived over that city in a few minutes, and turning off the current, hung motionless for hours in mid-air. It grew to night. No moon was up, but the sky was luminous with the stars of summer. The vast metropolis lay beneath him, clearly outlined by its electric lights. He could see its centre, Manhattan Island, from the Battery to the Harlem, throwing out its hundred bridges to east and west—great arms of light grasping the opposite shores. To the south stretched the glorious bay. Demos blew a kiss to what he supposed was the statue of Liberty. Alas, mistaken youth! That statue had given way to one of "Money Purchasing the World." To the north were miles on miles of residences, all aglitter with little incandescent globes. Even at the height where the air-ship floated was audible a faint, incessant hum, telling to the heavens that ten million human beings were astir.

"O!" cried Demos, in an ecstacy of yearning, "O, for a voice of thunder to reach that multitude and speak of liberty!"

Then he noticed that he was very hungry, and, imitating other air-ships, he descended. Steer-

ing to a hotel, to which a policeman directed him, he found the roof furnished with grappling-irons to which air-ships could be moored. Safety was insured by padlocks, of which each traveller carried away his particular key. Elevators ran to the roof to receive air-ship guests. Descending to the office Demos registered and was assigned to a room for which payment was requested in advance, no doubt because of his unfashionable attire. After partaking of a hearty supper he retired to bed, well satisfied with his day's work.

Rich New York went its usual way that night. In clubs and theatres and ballrooms the frothy tide of gayety swept on. Men laughed and jested, and fair women flirted, and none in all the city knew that among them had descended an Apostle of Liberty, at that moment snoring the honest snore of well-earned sleep.

Slumber, O Demos! Yet must thou soon awake and preach thy gospel. Will any listen?

CHAPTER VII.

The day at Washington ended in a very satisfactory way. The out-door ceremonies had consumed the entire afternoon and were followed at night by a grand ball at the palace. The financial flower of the Empire were present in their most gorgeous splendor to pay homage to His Supreme Richness, who, with a handshake here and a whisper there, seized every opportunity to turn an honest thousand in the pleasantest manner possible. Still it was evident that the imperial mind was preoccupied, and it was subsequently told how the monarch had actually imparted a genuine tip or two whereby the listeners profited. Touching proof that his thoughts were elsewhere.

Even without her exalted rank Sapphire would easily have been the queen of the occasion. She was robed in shimmering sea-green silk that clung in almost gossamer folds to every curve of her perfect form. She was crowned with the Crown of Morning, a marvellous work of the jeweller's art in which emeralds, rubies, topazes,

amethysts and other gems were grouped in exact imitation of flowers, sprinkled with diamond dew. A necklace of pearls, famous for their size and purity, accented the whiteness of her throat and shoulders and the fair round bust, of which enough was visible to drive a score of Saint Anthonies to distraction. But she, too, was preoccupied and danced as in a dream. Elderly, eligible millionaires made preposterous offers, gallant young nobles murmured soft vows and prayers—she heard them not; her thoughts were with her Demos. As the clocks struck twenty-four she experienced a thrill which she was sure was from her lover, and she bitterly regretted the absence of her telephone. Truth compels us to state, however, that the thrill must have been simply atmospheric, for at that precise moment Demos was consuming the last mouthfuls of a porterhouse steak and thinking of what he should take next.

At two in the morning she could no longer endure publicity, and, accompanied by Aurea, retired to her own apartments.

"O, Aurea," she cried, as soon as they were alone, "how hollow is life without love."

"So I have found it," sighed Aurea, sympathetically.

"Don't be absurd, dear," said Sapphire, lifting the Crown of Morning from her head and taking out sundry hairpins, whereat a kind of golden cloud fell streaming to her knees.

"I don't think I am absurd," said Aurea; "it is true, too true, that the object of my affection is repulsive, but is not my love for that very reason the more unselfish, the more laudable?"

Sapphire was surprised. She had never found Aurea argumentative before.

"I hadn't thought of it from that standpoint," she replied, unfastening the silken robes; "perhaps you are right." And the gossamer folds rustled to the ground, revealing the daintiest mysteries of lace and linen. "But what will your father say?" she asked.

Aurea was the daughter of no less a personage than the Imperial Swineherd.

"He will no doubt be annoyed," answered Aurea.

"But think of my case," said Sapphire; "a lover condemned to die unless he makes a million, which he positively refuses to do. Was ever a girl placed in such a frightful position?"

The mysteries of lace and linen had vanished now, and she stood in the undimmed glory of her radiant beauty. O, Beauty, sole power that sways

without an effort, before whom gods and men have worshipped since the world was, surely thou didst find thy last and highest expression in this twentieth-century girl. May the prudes and the evil-minded who would keep us silent before this divinity be forever banished to limbo and outer darkness! We will none of them. Had we the painter's brush, how quickly would we make immortal those gracious contours, those delicious curves, that gleamed through the cloud of golden hair. Beshrew us, but the pen is impotent! It can but faintly hint of the lustrous shoulders, the rounded bosom, the pliant waist, undeformed by abominable corsets; the lithe and supple limbs, trained calisthenically to the grace of strength; the thousand charms that blended and made one, were called the Princess Sapphire.

The bell of her portable telephone rang. The Princess blushed celestial rosy red.

"My wrapper, quick!" she cried.

Aurea threw that garment over her, enveloping her from neck to feet, and Sapphire ran to the telephone.

"Dearest," said the voice of Demos, "I have just awakened from a dream of you. Surely I saw you not a minute ago."

"O, I hope not," said the Princess.

"What do you mean?"

"Nothing, dear, nothing. Where are you?"

"In New York. I have an air-ship and a thousand dollars." And Demos told the story of his aërial adventure.

Then through the telephone passed the broken phrases, the fond endearments, so eloquent to those who utter them because they say nothing but mean everything; and thus science was made to serve love, as it should ever do, for love is lord of all.

Heaven knows how long this interview would have lasted but for a sudden interruption—a knock at the Princess' door.

"My father!" she cried, and blew a kiss to Demos, with a hurried good-bye.

The Emperor entered.

"Can I have a few minutes' private conversation with you?" he asked politely.

"Certainly," replied Sapphire, dismissing Aurea with a gesture.

As soon as they were alone the Emperor, as was his wont, proceeded straight to the point.

"My dear Sapphire," he said, "falling in love with a gentleman of democratic tendencies is the last thing I should have expected of my daughter."

"O, father, one has but to look at him."

"I have looked at him, and to be candid I am not at all prepossessed in his favor."

"O, father!"

"Not at all. His capacities strike me as limited. Men of one idea are always narrow and seldom successful. Look at me. I owe my fortune to my catholicity—I am always ready to adopt any opinions that promise to yield a fair profit. Frankly, I do not think your young man will make his million. He will never become rich."

"But he is rich."

"Indeed?"

"In virtue, beauty, courage, ardor—in all that makes a man he is most affluent."

"H'm!" said Vangold; "let us put it in another way—how would the commercial agencies rate him?"

"I know not, care not. I rate him in the agencies of nature."

"A large line of credit would hardly be extended to him on that basis," remarked the Emperor. "Now, my dear girl, I want you to listen to reason. If your estimable mother were alive I sould be spared this painful duty—as it is I must lacerate my remaining feelings."

"Father, nothing you may say will shake me."

"But I may induce you to shake Demos;" and the monarch smiled at his little pleasantry.

"Sapphire," he went on, "you cannot wish to see the young man perish. At the end of the month I shall assuredly order his execution, unless, of course, he turns up with a million—an almost impossible event—or unless—" and he paused, eyeing his daughter keenly with his particolored eyes.

"Unless what?" she asked.

"Unless you drop him."

"Drop him?"

"Precisely. Do so and I will pardon him. Yes, I will not only pardon him but I will find him some comfortable position outside of the Civil Service, for I'm sure he could never pass a competitive examination."

"Father, I cannot," said the Princess, sadly but firmly. "To drop him would be to drop myself into acute misery. No, we must take our chance."

"It's a very slim one," remarked the Emperor.

"Slim it may be, but we must take it. Now, father, you forget the other alternative. Demos may succeed in overthrowing the Empire."

"A most remote contingency," said the monarch. "Possible, of course. All things are pos-

sible. But I shouldn't advise you to count on it."

"O, father!" cried Sapphire, flinging her arms about his neck, "will you not be merciful? Let me have him. As my husband he could not be dangerous. I will answer for that."

"You forget my obligations to my customers," said Vangold. "Such a proceeding would violate the fundamental principles of our constitution and would set a precedent fraught with peril to our institutions. No, it cannot be."

"Then I must join forces with Demos. I, too, must seek to destroy your Empire." And the heroic girl faced her imperial sire with lofty resolve and undaunted mien. In her, too, ran the blood of the Vangolds.

The Emperor smiled indulgently. The threat, of course, but amused him and he rather admired his daughter's spirit.

"So it is to be war between us?" he asked, half playfully.

"A war for my lover's life," she answered, quite seriously.

He drew her to him and kissed her paternally, without the slightest animosity. His love for her was the one weak spot in an otherwise iron na-

ture, and her defiance was to him but as the harmless prattle of a babe.

Father and daughter parted—she to restless, feverish tossings and vain search of rest—he to his habitual calm, light sleep, the sleep of the tiger, conscious of his strength, ready to spring from ambush at the scent of prey. Woe to the lamb whose path lay thitherward!

CHAPTER VIII.

Three weeks had elapsed since the night that Demos reached New York. He had not been idle. To the best of his ability and in the most public manner he had everywhere promulgated the doctrines of Liberty.

One day he visited the Stock Exchange and witnessed with curiosity the wild, undignified scramble for gain. Nobles and plebeians jostled each other in the delirious dance of quotations. Shrill voices, deep voices, hoarse voices, all kinds of voices, vied in bids and offers, united in covetous clamor. News, rumors, lies, slanders sped from mouth to mouth—all with one frenzied purpose—to win wealth. With eyes fierce-shining, with haggard, sweaty faces, men fought and wrestled for the golden dollar, to them sole end and aim of all desire.

Demos noticed that particular attention was riveted on a certain telegraph station. It was the line from Washington, over which came the imperial bulletins. At the other end sat Vangold, presiding genius of the saturnalia.

Demos felt it incumbent on him to address the assemblage. He stood up in the front of the visitors' gallery in an oratorical attitude.

"Gentlemen," he said—and a momentary hush fell upon the exchange, while all eyes were turned upon the strange intruder—"Gentlemen, excuse me if I venture to remind you that all men are born free and equal."

A howl of good-humored derision greeted the remark and the interrupted gamble was resumed. What time had these men to listen to philosophical propositions?

An official touched Demos on the shoulder—"Better go," said the official.

Demos went. He did not feel that he had accomplished much.

He made earnest efforts to get his views published in the newspapers, but at first was invariably referred to the business office, where he was told he could insert what he chose in the advertising columns at the customary rates. This Demos did not feel that he could afford.

One editor, touched, perhaps, by his youth and ingenuousness, talked quite freely to him.

"To publish your views in my paper," he said, "except as advertising matter, would be a very foolish piece of business. It is true that the

press is absolutely free. We can print what we choose—the imperial authorities never interfere. The Government is wise enough to know that self-interest will compel the press to support the ruling class. How can it be otherwise? A well-conducted journal in these days has four sources of revenue—advertising, circulation, the sale of its editorials columns to corporations and trusts, and what it gets for the suppression of news. Now, for everything except circulation, it depends almost entirely upon the wealthy, whom it would be very silly indeed to offend.

"I will guarantee that there is not a paper in New York which would print anything unpleasant about a rich man, unless indeed that man should have had the hardihood to refuse substantial support to the paper. Then our proprietors themselves are of the wealthy class, all of them, in fact, Nobles, and directly interested in the maintenance of the Empire. You must remember we are not in the nineteenth century, when a certain amount of sentimental flapdoodle was still considered the proper thing to feed to the masses. The reign of money is now open and official. Wealth no longer reigns through forms and fictions, it is the legal and acknowledged sovereignty."

"Then," said Demos, "I infer that Liberty has no show in the press."

"That depends upon what you mean by liberty. The press maintains and upholds the liberty to acquire property by all legal means, it insists upon the liberty of the Nobles to tax the plebeians in every way that ingenuity can suggest, and of its own liberty to print or suppress what it chooses it is particularly jealous."

"Neither of the kinds of liberty you have mentioned seems to me entirely holy," said Demos.

"Indeed," said the editor, "you surprise me."

"My own brand of liberty," continued Demos, "is for the use of all mankind and is, I venture to think, a panacea for most social ills."

"You might see the editor of the *Dryheat*."

"I have met the gentleman in Washington," replied Demos.

"He preaches yet another kind of liberty," said the editor, "but really his sheet is without influence. He can no longer collect a cent—not even for the suppression of dynamite threats. Still, he might give you a hearing."

"I already have the promise of his support," said Demos; "he may become a loathsome necessity."

Demos left the editor feeling rather discour-

aged. However, the press was not long to remain closed to him. The story of his singular relations with the Emperor and his daughter leaked out and he became the sensation of the hour. Reporters besieged him for interviews, his portrait was published far and wide, and even his views were ventilated, not, though, as a matter to be taken seriously, but as a whimsical joke.

One morning he received a visit at his hotel from the manager of a dime museum.

"I understand," said the manager, "that you must make a million very shortly or suffer a disagreeable penalty."

"Such is the case," said Demos.

"I come to offer you a million."

"What," cried Demos, much moved, "have I at last found a supporter of the Sacred Cause?"

"I know nothing about your cause. I will give you a million for the exclusive right to exhibit you through the Empire for one year."

"In what capacity?"

"As a freak."

"My dear sir, you misunderstand. I don't want a million. I want to restore Liberty to the American people. I could not honestly appear as a freak."

"Nonsense. You are the most magnificent specimen of a freak imaginable."

"Do you really think so?"

"I'm sure of it. I'll sign a contract with you on the spot."

"I must refuse. It would be obtaining money under false pretenses."

"It would be the honestest money you ever earned."

But the young man was inflexible, and thus was lost forever one opportunity to elevate the museum stage.

The great city oppressed Demos. Manhattan Island was entirely devoted to business structures, with the exception of the parks, which still remained—oases in a wilderness of brick. The Imperial Plaisance, the former Central Park, was reserved to the Nobles, the smaller pleasure grounds were open to the public. Enormous power stations, some two miles apart, supplied electricity for public and private use. The old street-car tracks were utilized for the carriage of freight, in vehicles that connected with subterranean conduits, much after the fashion of the ancient trolley system. Local passenger traffic was by means of air-ships which, however, carried no motors, but slid along thin steel

rods charged with electricity. These rods were supported at a height of one hundred feet by slender tubes which were at the same time water pipes for the use of the fire department. The disappearance of horses and the constant use of the electric brush kept the streets exquisitely clean. In lieu of the rattle of wheels was audible everywhere the faint mysterious hum of omnipresent machinery. In factories, mills and workshops automatic devices almost entirely superseded human labor. It seemed as if anything could be accomplished by pressing a button or turning a switch. This was equally true of household matters. Electricity cooked, scrubbed, swept or washed with unfailing precision. The hands of a domestic were as white as those of her mistress.

In talking over this phase of civilization one day with his friend, the editor, Demos asked, "Does not this wonderful development of electric power greatly cheapen the necessaries of life?"

"Unquestionably," replied the editor, "and the luxuries, too."

"Then why should not everyone be comfortably off without great exertion?"

"You forget our system of government. All

these inventions are owned by great corporations which charge for their use the maximum that is collectible. In other words, they employ a forced, though indirect, method of taxation which inures to the sole benefit of the privileged classes."

"O, Liberty!" cried Demos, "sole cure for all these ills."

"I don't know about that," objected the editor; "we used to have what we called liberty, and things amounted to pretty much the same as they do now. We are simply franker. There's no humbug about the Empire."

"Pardon me," said Demos, "what you say only proves that you didn't possess the genuine article. My style of liberty is warranted to do the job."

Demos wandered among the poor—he spake burning words to them, but was heard with indifferent ears and looked at with lack-luster eyes. He made no headway at all, and time was getting short. He thought perhaps that New York was not the proper field for him, so one day, in his air-ship, he took a flying trip over the continent. He first dropped in at Buffalo, a city of some two millions, with the power of Niagara running cheaply its factories and

foundries. He stopped at Chicago, the central metropolis, with its five million inhabitants fervently worshipping the national symbol, of which it might be called the birth-place and the home. He took a look at Omaha, Denver, and San Francisco. They were all smaller New Yorks, with the same civilization, the same division of rich and poor, the same fury of acquirement.

He returned to New York in the evening, tired out and heartsick. He even had cowardly thoughts of the dime-museum manager. He resolved to consult Sapphire, and rang her up.

"Dearest," came promptly in her sweet voice.

"I'm getting along very poorly," he said.

"My own poor darling," cried Sapphire.

"Nobody seems to care for Liberty."

"I do, because you do."

"That's very nice of you, but one convert, and that a young woman, won't help me much."

"Perhaps more than you think, dear."

"I feel so hopeless that I thought I ought to tell you I'm offered a million."

"O! by whom?"

"The manager of a dime museum."

"But what for?"

"To go on exhibition as a freak."

"My Demos a freak! Never! It would kill me."

"Well, if I don't take some step your father will kill me, you know."

Something like a sob came to his ear, then the sweet voice again, now trembling.

"Demos, I must see you. Come to Washington to-morrow, after dark. We must meet secretly."

"With rapture, dear."

"Say at your old boarding-house."

"O, you know that place?"

"Yes—Aurea goes there to see her horrid affinity."

"Very good. To-morrow evening."

"Yes. O, dearest do you still love me?"

"More than ever."

"You're quite sure?"

"Of course. Transmit me a kiss, darling."

But we refuse to report the interview any further. Cold print is but a funeral dress for the tender stupidities, the ravishing nonsense, the fond incoherencies of love.

CHAPTER IX.

It was evening in the saloon of the widow Liebotshœner. There was a numerous gathering of guests, most of them rough and shaggy gentlemen with the undefinable but unmistakable air of the professional Anarchist. The practice of anarchy seems to demand of its votaries the cultivation of much hair, abstention from soap and water, a marked carelessness in costume, a deep devotion to tobacco and a passionate prejudice for beer. Nor are these traits to be greatly wondered at. Minds engaged in the lofty pursuit of the ideal by the dynamite route cannot be expected to occupy themselves with such ordinary trifles as cleanliness and neatness. Tobacco, even in the shape of Connecticut fine-cut, or cheap domestic cigars, is a powerful stimulant to thought, while beer is a benign beverage productive of volatile visions. There is a mystery, however, in the Anarchist's love of whiskers and long locks, but the true philosophy of hair has never yet been written. Why

was Samson strong only when unshaven? Why did the Roundheads so execrate the curls of the Cavalier? Why, for long years, did man hide his poll in a wig while he carefully scraped his face? Why is baldness, among civilized nations, an object of derision, while among savages it is an object of veneration? We know not. But this we know and fearlessly assert, that somewhere deep-planted in the human heart lie potent instincts that find expression in hair or the lack of hair. Doubtless the fierce moustachio, the luxuriant whisker, the bristling pompadour of your conscientious Anarchist, are the necessary and inevitable shadows of spiritual realities.

The atmosphere of the saloon was densely charged with smoke. Philosophers bandied epigrams and epithets, orators uttered flamboyant and bloodthirsty speeches in which the word "bloated" frequently occurred. All was ominous to capital, except the capital of the widow Liebotshœner, who, like an elderly Hebe, did herself minister to the wants of her clamoring guests.

But a sudden silence fell upon the saloon. It was caused by the entrance of Bill Boneyard, high-priest of his peculiar people.

"What cheer, comrades, what cheer?" asked

Bill. "Hath any among ye struck a blow for freedom of late?"

A general inarticulate growl was the only response.

"Brothers, brothers," said Bill reproachfully; "of what avail my teachings? Have I not repeatedly printed in the *Dryheat* a list of one hundred very objectionable millionaires? Do not the entire hundred yet cumber the ground and poison the air? Shame on you, shame on you."

"That's all very well," remarked a youthful disciple, "but why don't you set us an example?"

"I," cried Bill, "I? Never! I am needed to keep burning the torch of anarchy, which but for such as I would flicker out. But for my clarion voice you might forget yourselves and go to work, and work, my brethren, mark it well—work is fatal to anarchy. Yes, my brethren, even as rough-on-rats is to the peaceful rodent, so is labor to our holy faith." He paused, his voice husky with emotion, and demanded beer of the widow.

"There's quite a score against you already," said the widow doubtfully.

"Aye," replied Bill, "even so. It is no fault

of mine, widow. The faithful are slow to pay up their subscriptions—confoundedly slow."

"But I have to pay the brewer," said the widow.

"Accursed be the brewer!" shouted Bill. "A bloated monster who would withhold the lager of life from the lips of the poor! But heed me—the day will come when beer shall flow like water, when brewers shall furnish liquor free or drink themselves of molten lead. Ha! think of it! O, pleasing picture! A brewer drinking molten lead while beer flows down the parched throats of the poor."

Thunderous applause would have shaken the rafters had there been any rafters to shake. As it was, the papered ceiling visibly vibrated. The widow was conquered and immediately drew a schooner for Bill.

The young disciple—let us charitably suppose he had taken a drop too much—seemed still aggressive. "What do you know about work?" he asked of Bill.

"Fire and fury!" screamed Bill, "he asks me what I know of work—me, the martyr! Know, boy, that for one long year I was immured by the minions of the law on Blackwell's Island. They made me bathe—curse them! They

shaved my face and cut my hair—may they rot forever! They set me to work in the blacksmith's shop—may they be blown to a million atoms! O, brethren, it was tough. It was almost too much for me. I kept my spirits up with the aid of pleasing fictions. At every blow I struck I said to myself, 'This is a gold-bug, this is a bondholder, this is a Pharisee.' By these means I withstood the effect of work, for work, even in my case, was beginning to undermine my principles. It took a long course of idleness after my release to thoroughly rehabilitate me. Brethren, I have suffered."

"Death to the minions of the law!" shouted his hearers.

"Aye," said Bill, "death to them all—particularly to the policemen, who will not let us rise."

He drank deep of the foaming lager and, wiping his mouth on the back of his hand, inserted his huge pipe between his teeth. He looked hard at the young disciple, but that youth was vanquished.

"Master," he said, "have a drink on me."

All the sternness melted from Bill's face. His rugged nature was touched in a responsive spot. "Boy," he said, "I am with you. Let there be beer between us."

At this moment Demos entered the saloon. It was the time fixed for his appointment with the Princess Sapphire. He was warmly welcomed by the widow and the Anarchist, nor was the warmth diminished when he promptly settled his little outstanding account, displaying in doing so a well-filled pocketbook.

The Anarchist took him on one side.

"You seem well fixed," he said.

"Fairly so."

"Suppose I should strike you for a small loan?"

"I should feel it my duty to decline."

"Why?"

"Your principles are so execrable."

"Ha! You don't want me, then?"

"Not yet."

"Then your little affair of to-night doesn't go."

"What do you mean?"

"Just what I say."

"Explain yourself," said Demos, "what do you know of my business here?"

The Anarchist winked. "That girl," he said, "you know—the one that's stuck on me——"

"Good heavens!" interrupted Demos, "does Miss Aurea still nurse that fatal passion?"

"She does. It's unweanable."

Demos shuddered.

"Your girl's coming soon," said Bill, "I was to fix things for you, but if you're so close——" and he shrugged his shoulders.

"I see. You wish to blackmail me."

"The editor of the *Dryheat* never blackmails, but he takes yearly subscriptions payable in advance. The sum is five dollars strictly in cash."

"It's not exorbitant."

"It's dirt cheap. If you win one of our guessing contests you get a clockwork bomb free."

Demos subscribed. He reflected that he might guess and win a bomb in which event he could destroy at least one infernal instrument—a specious argument whereby he compromised matters with his conscience. This financial transaction concluded, the Anarchist told him to wait in the saloon till he heard three blows struck on the ceiling, which signal would signify that the Princess had arrived and was waiting in the parlor. He also informed Demos that Aurea would accompany her mistress.

"But I wish to see the Princess alone," said Demos.

"That's all right. I'll go out—the other one

will follow me—sure." And again the Anarchist favored Demos with a wink as he left the saloon.

The presence of a clean stranger seemed to disconcert the remaining Anarchists, who one by one departed until Demos and the widow were alone. The elderly Emma tried in vain to engage the young man in conversation. Her sprightly sallies fell unheeded on ears that were listening for three blows that were to announce the goddess of his dream. The moments seemed like hours, vague suspicions of Bill floated through his excited brain, when—one, two, three—the signal came. He flew upstairs to the parlor, he sprang inside—she was there! With a cry of delight he caught her to him and kissed the lovely lips that murmured his name.

"Dearest, we are not alone," she whispered.

Then he saw Aurea and the Anarchist. Greeting Aurea, he gave Bill a look which meant "Go."

"I tumble," said the Anarchist.

"Tumble?" echoed Sapphire, in surprise.

Bill spoke no more, but shambled out of the parlor. Aurea followed him.

"Aurea, you must not leave us," cried the Princess.

"Alas, I must," sighed Aurea. "The influ-

ence is too strong. To meet him is to follow him. Inexplicable Bill."

"Child, you dream," said her mistress.

"Perhaps I do. It's like a nightmare, isn't it? But the depth of my devotion to that hideous person is immeasurable."

And the once haughty maiden followed the Anarchist, who puffed his great pipe in complete indifference, nor vouchsafed her word or glance.

He passed down the stairway and out into a garden at the rear of the saloon. He flung himself upon a seat and sprawled in all the uncouthness of his bulk.

"Monster," said Aurea pathetically, "can nothing move you to pity?—to recognition of my superhuman attachment?"

A gruff chuckle was the only response, as the Anarchist lazily watched the stars, from one of which perhaps the shade of the supreme poet viewed the strange scene, thinking with grave, reminiscent smile of how Titania wooed Bottom, in the enchanted forest, hard by Athens.

CHAPTER X.

Left alone, Demos and Sapphire regarded each other in a transport too great for speech. She wore a long, hooded cloak which left nothing visible but her wondrous face. The single dim globe in the parlor created shadow rather than light, and the Princess looked more like some ethereal vision than a creature of flesh and blood.

"O!" cried Demos at last, with mingled ardor and adoration, "how beautiful you are!"

She smiled the gratified smile of a woman who listens to her lover's praise, and suffered him to fold her in his arms. His boldness did not displease her. Secure in the fearless frankness of her love, his kisses left her undisturbed. She was filled with sweet, indulgent tenderness and gracious trust. Nevertheless, youth is youth, and Demos began to realize that he clasped no vision, but a most charming reality.

"Dearest," she said, "I have much to say to you, and time is flying."

Her voice recalled his wandering wits.

"Come," she went on, "let us sit down and talk matters over."

He led her to the sofa and sat by her side.

"I think I had a little touch of vertigo," he stammered out.

"Poor boy," she said, laying her hand upon his brow, "you have been working so hard."

"Yes," assented Demos, now fully himself, "I have been carrying on business pretty steadily."

"Help me off with my cloak," she said, "it has grown so very warm."

The cloak was laid aside. She wore a dress of blue and amber tints that much became her, yet Demos did not like it. He had always thought of her in pure white, he said. She explained to him that she was not free to wear what she chose—that for every official function the costume was prescribed by statute. The dress she had on was that of a directress in one of her father's banks, a board-meeting of which she had been attending. This enlightened but annoyed Demos. It reminded him that she was the daughter of Vangold, against whom he was waging so fruitless a struggle. She was quick to perceive his altered mood and to guess its cause.

"You are not succeeding?" she asked.

"No."

"Tell me just how you go about it."

"I orate of liberty to everyone."

"But how?"

"How? Why I just orate. I have composed and committed to memory a number of very fine speeches."

"But what do you say?"

"Shall I deliver one of them?"

"No, no! To what passions or interests do you appeal?"

"To patriotism—to the love of freedom—to the desire of equality."

"I thought so. Foolish boy."

"Foolish? I assure you my speeches are very burning efforts and ought to be very convincing."

Demos was piqued. He admired his orations exceedingly and could not understand their failure.

"You have not struck the right idea," said Sapphire. "You appeal to feelings that are dead."

"Not dead—dormant," corrected Demos.

"Well, so very dormant that they might as well be dead. The proper thing is to show the people that Liberty will pay."

"Will pay?"

"Certainly. Show them how their toil is taxed for the benefit of the few. Show them how Liberty will pay, say, eighty cents on the dollar, while the present state of things pays only forty. Such an argument must prove irresistible."

"Since when have you become so wise?" cried Demos, amazed.

"Since I have loved," she answered, with a smile so arch, so winning, so tempting, that Demos promptly ceased talking political economy to act love. Surprised at this sudden change of front she, for a few brief moments, permitted the caresses which the impetuous youth showered upon her from head to foot in the fervor of his gratitude and worship.

"Ah! if the people would love you as I do!" she exclaimed, rising hurriedly from the sofa.

She walked to the window looking out upon the garden. Intoxicated with her presence, filled with vague unrest and mysterious hopes, Demos wavered.

"I can give up the fight," he said hoarsely, "I can accept the million of the dime-museum and you will be mine."

"Never!" she cried, confronting him, superb

with scorn. "You, a freak upon a platform, gazed at by anyone with ten cents to spend?"

"They might charge extra for me."

"And if they did, how would that help matters? At a quarter you would still be despicable, and I don't suppose you would draw at any higher price."

"But you would be mine."

"No! The bride of Demos, the Apostle, I will be. If they put you to death, I will be your widow. Nothing shall come between us. But the bride of Demos, the Freak, I could not become—rather would I welcome old-maidhood with all its attendant inconveniences."

The ringing words went home, the point of temptation was passed forever. Demos now shuddered to think that he could have contemplated freakship.

"Forgive me," he said. "Love makes cowards."

"And love makes heroes," she replied. "Follow my advice, preach in the correct way to the people and you will win. You have ten days left."

"I will," he cried. "I will say to them, 'Numskulls, be free that you may be better off. Dolts, conquer liberty that will increase your wages.

Idiots, acquire freedom and reduce taxation. Fools, let equality cheapen bread and butter. Come, come, one and all, wage holy war for the sacred pocketbook. Liberty pays!'"

"O, glorious!" said Sapphire, "now you are eloquent indeed."

"Of course ten days is not much time, and it will be very awkward if I fail."

"You mean that my father will execute you?"

"Yes."

"Not while I am around," said the daughter of Vangold, with a something metallic in her voice that recalled the Emperor. "I shall take measures for your personal safety. It is true that my father is all-powerful, but since I have loved I do not fear to cope with him."

O, how changed was she from the girl of three weeks ago. Love, the necromancer, waves his wand, and the shrinking maid becomes a fury, the callow youth a hero.

"Last night," she said, "you telephoned me that one convert, and that a young woman, wouldn't help you much. You were mistaken. My aid is not to be despised."

Demos was thunderstruck. It began to dawn upon him that he was dealing with a Vangold, with the scion of a particularly virile race. A

curious sensation of respect tempered those softer feelings which hitherto had monopolized his heart. With pride he reflected that this royal girl was his—with humiliation he felt that he was certainly her inferior. That he had dared to fold her in his arms, to cover her with kisses, seemed to him now an audacious profanation. With unerring instinct she read the complex thoughts that bewildered him and straightway she came to him.

"Demos," she said—and, O, how gentle now her voice—"Demos, mistake me not. It is you, and you alone, that gives me courage. Don't think me masculine—I am but as a mirror to reflect your daring. O, love, I am yours—yours completely—do with me as you will, but love me. Love me more than Liberty."

She wound her arms about his neck and looked up into his eyes. She offered her mouth to his, and the faint aroma of her breath surrounded him. A rosy tint slowly crept over her face and throat and breast that but a moment since were so white and cold and stern. With a gasp he fell upon his knees before her, quivering with emotion.

"O, love, love," he cried, "it is for you to com-

mand. I am all unworthy of you. Be gracious to your rude, rough Demos."

She laid her hand upon his head. "My rude, rough Demos," she repeated, caressingly.

It was a charming sight—strength kneeling to beauty, as strength should ever do, for beauty is the sum and flower of all things created, the inspiration of all noble deeds and thoughts, the guerdon wherefor do gods and men strive mightily.

"Dearest," she said, "we must part for about ten days. Put in as much work as you can around New York. When your time is up return to me. I will meanwhile make it warm for my father."

"Do, sweet one, do," said Demos, "make it as warm as you conveniently can, for he is certainly a tough subject."

"I know it. Never yet has he met defeat."

"It's time he began," said Demos, indignantly.

"Don't abuse him any more than you can help, for after all he is my own papa."

"If he were not your own papa I should challenge him to single combat."

"He fights only by proxy. He keeps a half-dozen pugilists for such emergencies, not to mention the police."

"I see there would be difficulties," remarked Demos.

With such light chat did they put off the parting moment, and might have put it off still longer but for the intrusion upon the scene of the Anarchist, followed by Aurea.

"Couldn't stand it any longer," said Bill, "she's wearing on a fellow," jerking his dirty thumb toward Aurea.

"O, horrible, yet fascinating pet," that young lady murmured.

"Aurea, I grieve for you," said the Princess, "you have contracted a most distressing passion —more distressing, perhaps, to your friends than to yourself."

"I don't see how that can be," said Aurea; "I am agonized—yet there is delight of a certain kind in real agony. Isn't there?" she asked the Anarchist.

"I'd be delighted if you would occasionally shut up," that gentleman growled. "Adore as much as you like, but for heaven's sake keep quiet once in a while. You make me tired."

"You are grossly impolite," said Demos, severely.

"Who wouldn't be? Don't I have to talk for a living? Thunder and lightning! I'm blowing

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off steam all day at other folks—am I, in my spare moments, to have steam blown off at me? I won't stand it."

"What sweetly repulsive fury," said Aurea admiringly.

"Now stop it!" roared Bill. "Look at me all you want, but do it quietly."

"To look at you is the worst of all," said the Princess, contemptuously. "You must treat Aurea with more consideration. She will no doubt recover in time."

"I hope so," said Bill. "First I thought I was in luck, but I ain't. I'm hoodooed."

Nevertheless it was plain that under this boisterous affectation the worthy Anarchist was proud of his conquest, and he favored Aurea with infrequent leers that made him a marvel of ugliness unique to look at, and upon which she emotionally subsisted.

"We must go," said the Princess to Aurea.

Escorted by Demos and Bill they passed down stairs and into the garden, where was moored a small air-ship which they entered. Demos watched its short flight to the palace and then sought his own conveyance.

"Partner," said the Anarchist, as Demos was

about to start, "take a few bombs and drop 'em over the country as you fly. I have a couple of dozen in my pockets. You're welcome."

"As I have told you before, they are not in my line," answered Demos. "I thank you for your courtesy, of course, but I execrate your views."

"You'll think different a week hence."

"Possibly."

"You'll find me right here."

"I may have to look you up."

And Demos shot into space, reaching New York in something over five minutes.

Bill walked, meditative, through the streets. He was struck with the vigor and nerve of Demos. He confidently counted on his being forced to come to him for help to avoid the Emperor's sentence, and delighted visions of triumph floated before his bloodshot eyes. "All we need is nerve," said he, shaking himself, "if I had nerve what a dandy I would be." And again he fell to dreaming and stood still—he seemed to hear the explosion of dynamite, the roar of guns, the yells of an enraged populace, over whom floated the blood-red flag of Anarchy. But stern reality in the shape of a policeman came along

and ordered him to move on. Sad image of his fate—to be forever shoved on one side by brutal force. Mildly and meekly he obeyed—he always did—and returned to the widow's saloon.

CHAPTER XI.

The last week of the apostleship of Demos will be forever memorable in the annals of the American people. He worked with incredible vigor. Once an hour he delivered an oration in New York which was instantly transmitted to, and repeated by phonographs, in every important center of population. These orations followed the lines laid down by Sapphire and portrayed vividly the pecuniary profits of liberty. Looked at from this point of view liberty possessed attractions for the popular mind, and public opinion, so long silent, began to be heard again in the land. The newspapers, quick to feel the public pulse, viewed with alarm the incipient signs of revolution, and called upon the authorities to suppress the agitator. But the Emperor gave no indication of uneasiness. Impassive as usual, he went his way and never mentioned the name of Demos. True, he had been quite busy of late directing some very delicate operations in the stock market, which had just happily cul-

minated in the ruin of some twenty or thirty great speculators and the transfer of their millions to the imperial pocket—a process which never lost its charm for Vangold.

Capital, however, is proverbially timid, and a certain restlessness pervaded the ranks of the Nobles. It was hard for them to be obliged to listen every day to the public phonographs pouring forth hourly protests against the imperial system, and informing the plebeians of the immense advantage to them in a return to republican liberty. The apparent indifference of the Emperor puzzled them, but they dared not question him. Porker alone ventured to ask him why the phonographs were allowed to be used for such seditious purposes. "My friend," was the reply, "the rates per hour are fixed by statute. Whosoever can pay can rent. The young man is a steady customer and his money is as good as that of another."

"But his atrocious sentiments!" cried Porker.

"Words, mere words," said Vangold, dismissing the subject with a smile.

Porker did not at all relish the Emperor's attitude. Long acquaintance with his master led him to fear some hidden trap, but he vainly cudgelled his brains for a plausible theory of

Vangold's do-nothing policy—yet he knew that many of the Emperor's most famous coups had been preceded by similar ominous calm. Determined to seek advice and counsel, he secretly called a meeting of the four secretaries. The meeting took place at Porker's house on the evening of July the twenty-seventh.

"Gentlemen," said Porker, "I may be wrong, but I am convinced that we stand upon the brink of a serious crisis."

"Unquestionably," said Pontmorgue; "I have observed for a week past a steady and regular decline in the national securities."

"The produce markets are in a similar condition," said Blighter.

"Oil and cotton, too," added Rockyfellow.

"As for the general state of affairs," remarked Marcanna, "it is highly unsatisfactory. That young man Demos is stirring up the plebeians at a great rate. Why, gentlemen, there is even talk in New York of reorganizing the Tammany Society."

"A rumor too horrible to be true, I trust," said Porker. "But we wander from the point. Why are all our markets declining in the face of unusual prosperity and a triumphant financial government? Who is doing the selling?"

They all grew pale. The same thought flitted through each man's brain at the same moment, a thought too fearful for utterance—but Porker rose to the occasion.

"Gentlemen," he said, "what I read in your faces cannot be. His Supreme Richness would never tamper, or may I say monkey, with the national markets."

A sarcastic hum ran round the room.

"Reflect, gentlemen," the Swineherd went on, "the Emperor's interest in the preservation of our financial Empire is greater than all of ours combined."

This seemed indeed a forcible argument, but the spirit of distrust was now aroused and alert.

"When does the young man die?" asked Pontmorgue of the Swineherd.

"On the first of August, unless he shows up with a million."

"Of course he won't do that," said Rockyfellow, "we know that patriotism and money-making seldom go hand in hand. Our personal experience warrants that conclusion."

"He will undoubtedly die," said Porker, "unless the Emperor has other views."

"Have you any reason to suspect other views?" asked Blighter.

"None whatever. Personally his execution will please me, for his affair with the Princess Sapphire has aroused a ridiculous desire in the collective female breast for love—which might interfere seriously with our system of marrying our daughters to the highest and best cash bidders. My own Aurea has conceived some paradoxical passion, I believe." And the placid Porker heaved a large sigh.

"Gentlemen," said Marcanna, "I have lately been studying pretty closely the history of the nineteenth century. It is singular to note with what respect—yes, with what positive fear—contemporary writers of that period speak of what they call Public Opinion."

"What is Public Opinion?" asked Rockyfellow.

"I do not exactly know," said Porker, to whom all were looking. "But that a mysterious, deadly force of that name previously existed is beyond doubt, and that Demos is endeavoring to call it to life is equally positive."

Strange coincidence! At this very moment the phonograph of the Porker mansion, which was connected with the public circuit, began to talk, and the following sentences were heard in the voice of Demos:

"O, my brothers, let Public Opinion awaken and sweep all before it. The roar of the wind, the roll of the tide, the sweep of the avalanche, the plunge of the cataract, the flame of the sun, the shock of the thunderbolt, all gathered and blent in one, are as naught to the mysterious force of Public Opinion. Beware, O kings! for light shall overwhelm the dark! Lift up your heads, ye oppressed, for Liberty has drawn her sword of flame—Liberty, who like a new Venus, ariseth from a new sea—the sea of Public Opinion!"

The five Nobles looked at each other aghast. The strong young voice was so confident that they trembled at its sound. They did not clearly understand the meaning of the words, but felt it was inimical to them. While they were staring at each other a telegram was brought to Porker.

"Goodness gracious!" he exclaimed, as he read the dispatch, "the trouble has begun."

"What is the matter?" they all cried.

"I am boycotted."

The telegram was passed from hand to hand. It was too true. A boycott was declared against all the Swineherd's vast establishments at Chicago, Kansas City, and elsewhere. The cause was trivial, but that made the action more sin-

ister. A foreman in one of the packing-houses had declined to take a drink with a walking delegate. The delegate had promptly demanded the dismissal of the foreman, which had been refused, whereupon the boycott was declared. For over twenty-five years no similar action had been taken by walking delegates, who were all secretly on the payroll of the Money Trust. This exhibition of independence was indeed threatening.

"Gentlemen," said Porker, gloomily, "this is a sad matter. Must my hams, my sausages, my lard, all my strictly first-class hog products, lie rotting in my storage warehouses?"

"No, no," spake up Pontmorgue encouragingly, "the Nobles will eat of them." To which the other secretaries assented.

"Of a few superfine brands only," said Porker. "The bulk of my products would scarcely be appropriate on a Noble table. In a business way I cater to the masses."

"You have found it profitable," remarked Blighter.

"Very profitable, which makes this boycott the more exasperating. I haven't the slightest doubt that Demos it at the bottom of it all."

"We might go short of hog-products," said

Blighter, musingly. "Somebody else has been doing it to an enormous extent lately."

Again a glance of fear passed from eye to eye. Could there be any connection between that fact and the boycott?

"It is rather awkward to speculate on a friend's troubles," said Pontmorgue.

"Unless the friend is in the deal," added Rockyfellow. "If Porker, now, would join us in a bear syndicate——"

"Impossible," interrupted the Swineherd, "to be frank with you, I am pretty deeply involved on the other side."

"O, well," said Pontmorgue, as if glad to relieve himself, "since we are to be frank, I will admit that I have been bulling things myself to some extent."

"So have I," said Blighter, "I'm in up to my neck."

"Gentlemen," said Rockyfellow, "is this on the dead level?"

They assured him that it was, and their growing fright, more than their statements, convinced him of their truthfulness.

"Know, then," he said, "that Marcanna and myself are in the same boat as you. We are jointly interested in heavy bull operations."

"Yes," said Marcanna, "and how does it happen that we find ourselves all in the same boat?"

They were seized with a veritable panic. There seemed to rise before them a terrible menacing figure—the figure of Vangold. Each one hastened to tell how he had been led into his present position in the markets by confidential tips from their illustrious master. Yet it did not seem possible that he could be playing them false, for the very existence of his Empire depended upon a prosperous and powerful order of Nobles. This mystery terrified them, and it was unanimously decided that they should at once seek the Emperor and demand an explanation. Upon their arrival at the palace they were told that the Emperor was closeted with his daughter, but that he would grant them an interview the following morning. Compelled to be satisfied with this, they retired to their respective homes in woeful worriment, nor did it at all relieve them to hear trilled out from a public phonograph the following ribald parody of the national anthem:

Slyest, spryest, scariest, stealthiest,
Boom! boom! boom!
All expressed in one word, wealthiest,
Boom! boom! boom!

The Monarch of Millions.

Peal, alarm-bells! wave, pavilions!
Boom! boom! boom!
Threatened is the man of millions,
Boom! boom! boom!

CHAPTER XII.

That same evening—the twenty-seventh of July—the Emperor had retired to his private office immediately after dinner. In his office all imperial pomp was dispensed with and the monarch became the plain business man. It was a large square apartment on the second floor of the palace and it was burglar-proof. Entirely windowless, it was ventilated by an air-shaft which ran to the roof, ingress through which was prevented by a grating of steel bars, which could, however, be unlocked and slid along the ceiling by one inside the office, and as the shaft was fitted with a fixed ladder it was supposed that the Emperor at times used it for the reception of secret emissaries, who could, of course, easily reach the outside by an air-ship. The office was plainly furnished with two large cylinder desks, one for Vangold and one for his private secretary, a safe and a few chairs. The telegraphic, telephonic and phonographic apparatus centered on a switch-

board so ingeniously arranged that connection could be made instantaneously with any station or instrument in the world. Pekin was as accessible as the house next door. Electricity lit the room with a perfect simulation of daylight.

This evening Vangold did not summon his secretary, but sat at his desk alone in deep reflection. Gone was the affable smile which he wore as a perpetual mask before men. The great brain was working and the face was left free to mirror thought. That he was dwelling on no ordinary topic was evident from the dull fire of his black eye and his blue eye, from the nervous twitching of his lips, that permitted his large sharp teeth to gleam through the particolored moustache. Seen thus, his quite ordinary features became transfigured and shone with the terrible majesty of concentrated force. The peculiarity of his double complexion added a touch of the grotesque.

Rousing himself from his reverie he examined certain reports of the day's transactions and entered their results in a small ledger, which process seemed to give him much satisfaction. He then went to the safe and opened it, revealing huge stacks of securities, carefully catalogued and ticketed. "All ready for immediate de-

livery," he muttered, and then he indulged in a quiet, enjoyable, solitary laugh.

Going to the telephone he called up his daughter and requested her to join him in the office. She came at once, and he closed the steel door, telling her that he wished a private conversation with her. He had greeted her with his usual kiss and he spoke in the kindest, fatherliest way. He placed an easy chair for her close to his desk, at which he sat down. He looked at her and felt to the full the pardonable pride of paternity. She had removed her state dress and wore a loose dressing-gown quite carelessly girdled and unfastened at the top. The gown was of some red stuff which admirably set off her round white throat and noble bust. She had a peculiar trick in walking of throwing her head a little back of the perpendicular in a manner slightly haughty, yet charmingly provoking, and as she crossed the room this trait of carriage was more accented than usual, indicative of defiance.

"I must confess," said her father, "it is not surprising that you excite admiration! Really, my dear, you are grown quite a woman."

"Yes," she replied, "in the hot-house of love development is rapid."

"Tut, tut, my Sapphire is no hot-house flower,

but a very costly specimen of the natural article."

This playful tone was not what she expected, and she regarded her imperial sire with some apprehension.

"By-the-bye," he continued, "how is your young man getting on?"

She thought before replying, and vainly tried to study his face, over which strayed an enigmatical smile.

"Demos is doing pretty well," she said at last, "as of course you know."

"He is certainly making headway," he admitted. "He has done well to follow your instructions, which were full of good sense."

"My instructions?"

"Don't be surprised, dear. I am obliged to keep myself posted. Listen." He took a small phonograph from his desk which he set going and she heard repeated her interview with Demos in the widow's parlor. The instructions she had given him, their vows of love, their very kisses, word for word, sound for sound, echoed through the room.

"O," she cried, blushing furiously, "this is shameful!" and she buried her face in her hands.

"No," he said, "it is business."

Then curiosity overcame her and she asked eagerly, "How did you manage it?"

"O, very simply. The widow is in my pay."

"Is everybody in your pay?"

"By no means. I only buy up those who are useful to me. It would be silly extravagance to purchase promiscuously."

A great fear descended upon her. Was it possible to combat this all-powerful father whose hands, filled with money, reached everywhere, buying what he chose? Then a sudden thought struck her.

"You knew, and did not stop him?" she asked.

"As you see."

"But why?"

"That is what I am going to tell you."

She had risen, flushed, dishevelled, panting, her glorious eyes ablaze.

"Whatever you have to tell me, bear in mind—I love him, and you shall not harm him. To kill him, you must first kill me. I will defend him with my love, my life; yes, with this weak body——" and she smote her tender breast with her clenched hand, bruising it with the seal of her devotion.

For once Vangold was startled from his calm. "You musn't hurt yourself," he cried, seizing

her hands. "Come, sit down—hear what I have to say." He gently forced her into the chair, beside which he remained standing. Suddenly she burst into tears. "O, father," she sobbed, "be merciful."

Patting her head the Emperor remained silent till the fit of weeping was exhausted. Ashamed of her weakness she quickly recovered composure, using her sooth-all with instant benefit.

"Are you feeling better?" asked Vangold.

"I am ready," she answered, quite coldly and firmly.

He resumed his seat at his desk and sat facing her.

"Four weeks ago, when your young man first appeared, I was much annoyed, as you may remember. Harmless enough in himself, your passion for him made him a nuisance."

"Demos a nuisance!" she murmured indignantly.

"Distinctly a nuisance. Out of regard for you I gave him what I thought was a fair show. You know how absurdly he behaved—in fact we listened to your sentiments just now on the phonograph. I kept my eye on him, of course, and as soon as I heard your conversation with him I saw that you had made his scheme a possibility. The

family brains have not deteriorated in that little head and I compliment you. I don't know exactly about the emotional portion of your interview, never having passed through a similar experience, but don't you think it was rather warm?"

"O, father," she cried, "it would be impossible to be too warm to Demos."

"H'm! A trifle more economy in the matter of kisses might perhaps be more in accord with propriety, but we will let that pass—the circumstances were peculiar, I admit."

"He is the soul of propriety," said Sapphire, rather feebly, her cheeks again aflame.

"My first impulse was to suppress him at once, when the idea came to me which I flatter myself is both grand and gigantic—a worthy rounding out of my career."

"Does it affect my Demos?"

"Yes."

"Favorably?"

"Yes."

"Then whatever it is, I welcome it. My dearest Demos." And the lovely face softened with the glow of happiness.

"I am going to make you my confidant," said the Emperor. "I never had a confidant yet, but

you are now a woman and my heiress, and, as I remarked before, you possess the family brains. I ask your close attention."

The monarch paused. He seemed to wish to gather his thoughts. His face again wore the faint habitual smile which rendered it inscrutable.

"When I became Emperor a year ago it was not that I cared a rap for the title or the pomp of office. I had ruled the American people for a good many years as a private citizen and my assumption of official rank was solely in the interest of my fortune. It afforded me a plausible pretext for increased taxation, for the still closer consolidation of capital and the increase of monopolies. The change of government was a very easy matter, for republican institutions had long been the emptiest of forms. Do you follow me?"

"Certainly," said Sapphire. "You considered the throne a good investment?"

"Precisely. My dear child, your quick comprehension delights me. And the throne has been a good investment—a very good investment indeed."

"But what has all this to do with my Demos?"

"Patience. We are coming to that. I like the Emperorship as far as it goes, but it has its draw-

backs. To maintain a constitutional empire you must have a nobility, and despite the most ingenious precautions you cannot prevent your Nobles from getting altogether too rich. Such men as my Imperial Swineherd, not to mention others, are far too wealthy. I have continuously carried on little campaigns against them in the markets, but have not been able, so to speak, to more than nibble at their accumulations. I have long been trying to devise a way to clean the whole lot out at one swoop. That way I have found."

He spoke with a modest, dignified pride that was clearly warranted, as he looked benignly at his daughter. She listened intently, waiting to hear where her Demos came in. He guessed her thoughts.

"You are anxious about your young man. Well, he is the key of my present manipulations."

He thoroughly enjoyed the intense surprise with which Sapphire received this statement.

"He has unquestionably aroused Public Opinion. Personally I regard Public Opinion as I do the jackass, a thing to browse and bray whither it will; but the jackass can be a very useful beast of burden. My emissaries are spreading the teachings of Demos far and wide.

On the first day of August there will be concerted uprisings all over the Empire. Air-ships will bring to Washington millions of men who will demand the restoration of the Republic and I shall abdicate."

"Abdicate?" she cried, in amazement.

"Yes, my dear. I shall retire to private citizenship."

"And what will be the effect?"

"The effect will be a panic in every market in the world. Everybody will fear everything. Confidence for the time-being will vanish—money will be hoarded—prices will drop out of sight."

"Still I don't understand——"

"Of course not. But you will when I tell you that I have sold everything short to everybody. Porker, the Secretaries, the Judges, the Nobles—all—all are long of everything—they will be ruined utterly, wiped out—I shall get all they have and they will still be in my debt. Practically I shall own the entire national wealth."

He arose to his feet in exultation and his daughter for the first time saw him as he really was, the faint smile gone, the face as if carved by the Titanic will behind it. He seemed to dilate before her gaze, she could almost imagine that

lightning was flashing from his black eye and his blue eye.

At this moment there was a knock at the door. An official brought the request of Porker and the Secretaries for an audience. As we know, the Emperor deferred it till the following morning.

"Already they suspect," he said; "but they are too late. Any attempt on their part now to change their position would simply precipitate the catastrophe. But I don't wish matters to be anticipated. I shall play my imperial rôle as usual until the first of August."

He walked up and down his office, seemingly forgetful of his daughter's presence.

"But how about my Demos?" she asked.

"O, yes. Your Demos may live. The people will very likely do something nice for him."

"But may I marry him?"

"If it pleases you, child. As I shall be the only rich person left, money will cut no figure in your marriage."

With a cry of joy she threw herself into her father's arms.

"Not a word of this to him till after the first of August," he said, to which she readily gave her promise.

"But will you not run some personal danger?" she asked.

"O, yes. I shall double my guard of pugilists and detectives. I shall take good care of myself."

"But will not the restored Republic regard you as an enemy?"

He laughed heartily.

"My dear child, I shall own the Republic. If it suits me to change the style of government again I shall do it. I may decide on a strictly personal despotism later on. I have been much bothered in my time by congresses and judges."

"I don't think Demos would approve such views," she said, thoughtfully.

"Demos be shocked!" he exclaimed, with sudden exasperation.

"O, father!"

"I beg your pardon. I suppose I must swallow the young man on your account; but, to be frank, he is not a pleasant dose."

"To me he is a draught of joy," she replied, "and since you have granted him life I care not what else happens."

"We will let it go at that," said the monarch.

Then he gave her his arm and led her to her own rooms, where he left her with an affection-

ate good-night. He returned to his office and worked far into the night, quite alone. With his own imperial hand he sent scores of messages to all market centers, where vigilant agents awaited his orders day and night. With his own imperial voice he telephoned to this place and to that, planning, plotting, directing, executing, holding in his grasp the thousand threads of his gigantic deal, before which all other deals were to pale and dwindle.

True sovereign of the twentieth century! No need of titles to proclaim his royalty—the solid royalty of gold—from the yoke whereof can no man flee, nor wish to flee, for the love whereof do all men toil, or wish to toil. Gold, royal gold! And homage to His Supreme Richness.

CHAPTER XIII.

The next day—the twenty-eighth of July—the Emperor called a meeting of the executive council of the National Money Trust for twelve o'clock. At ten o'clock he gave audience to Porker and the Secretaries. Those gentlemen were promptly on time and were received in his private office. They were laboring under great suppressed excitement and awaited with ill-disguised impatience the imperial permission to speak. However, the Emperor kept them waiting some twenty minutes before he arose from his desk.

"Well, gentlemen," he then said, "it's a nice morning despite the weather predictions. Really, Marcanna, that weather bureau of yours needs a shake-up. I'm surprised the people stand it."

"The people!" gasped Marcanna, astounded to hear that word from the imperial mouth.

"I beg pardon," said Vangold, "a slip of the tongue." And his eyes wandered from man to

man, searchingly. His noble subjects were evidently uneasy.

"Have you anything particular to say to me, gentlemen? This is one of my busy days."

"Your Supreme Richness," said Pontmorgue, "every employé on every railroad in the Empire has struck."

"Why?"

"The Superintendent of the Marine Railway at Coney Island forgot to take his hat off to the brakeman of a west-bound train."

"What a reckless, foolhardy man," observed Vangold.

"Your Supreme Richness," said Blighter, "I also have to report that every farmer on every farm has struck."

"And I," added Rockyfellow, "that every colored man in every cotton-field has done likewise."

"In fact," said Marcanna, "in a general way every man, woman, child and infant in the realm has struck."

"Indeed," said the Emperor. "But struck what?"

"Work."

"What a curious idea. It hasn't happened be-

fore for a long time. What do you suppose is the reason of it, gentlemen?"

"Your Supreme Richness," said Porker, "we have no doubt that the wretched Demos is at the bottom of the whole business."

"H'm! possibly. Perhaps it's fortunate that he dies on the first proximo. We must see the thing through, gentlemen, we must see the thing through."

He spoke with a calm assurance that somewhat relieved them. Not a shadow of their fear was visible in him.

"When did you learn this news?" he asked.

"This morning."

"But it was last night you asked for an audience."

"Yes," spoke up Porker, "but that was about something else."

"And that something else?"

"The condition of the markets. For the past week everything has been steadily sinking. Under your advice we have constantly kept on buying."

"Certainly," said the Emperor. "We must sustain prices to sustain the Empire. Keep right on buying, gentlemen, keep right on. As long as our Empire lasts you will be all right."

"But yourself?"

"It is self-evident that I have more at stake than any of you. Look." And he threw open his safe, disclosing the enormous stack of securities that almost filled the huge receptacle. "You see I play with my cards on the table."

The stroke was conclusive. The almost fabulous pile of securities dazzled them. It was impossible for their owner not to be on the bull side.

"Who can be the sellers?" cried Pontmorgue.

"Foreigners, no doubt," answered Vangold, "who think these pratings of Demos mean something. Little do they know us, my friends, and our vast resources. We will hang their hides on our fences before long. You have, I presume, received your notices of the meeting called for twelve o'clock of the executive council? At that meeting I shall propose active concerted bull measures. Can I rely on your support, gentlemen?"

"You know that I shall be found with you," said Porker. "Am I not already boycotted?"

"I have heard something of that, my poor friend. How much of you is affected?"

"My hams, sideribs, lard, sausages; in fact, all of me."

"Dear, dear—it's very annoying."

"As for myself and my colleagues," said Rockyfellow, "I assure you we will stay by your Supreme Richness till the last bright dollar shall have winged its way down the bottomless abyss of bankruptcy."

"Then you will stay by me till an extremely cold day shall have dawned. Gentlemen, I thank you. Your devotion is touching. But to take all precautionary measures—how is the American Army?" asked the Emperor of Marcanna.

"On its customary active and efficient footing. Potting Asiatics in the outlying provinces."

"Good, the gallant boys must have their nerve well in hand. And the air-fleet?"

"Exercising along the Jersey coast and other summer resorts."

"Capital. Their courage is being well tempered. Be of good heart, gentlemen. I shall see you at noon in New York."

Taking this as a dismissal, the Nobles left the imperial presence much comforted by their interview. Vangold possessed in a high degree the faculty of transmitting confidence.

The Emperor passed into the Money Hall, a room of the palace to which all Nobles had ac-

cess in the morning. He found a great crowd assembled, each man eager for a private word or two, and each man got it. To all he whispered, "Buy, buy—" and all rushed out and bought. Prices actually moved up a point or two, and the Nobles grew jubilant at this seeming evidence that the tide had turned. Faith in Vangold that had wavered for a few hours was completely restored, and as he entered his airship to fly to New York, where the executive council was to meet, he was hailed with thunderous acclamations. Never had the Empire appeared more splendid or more firmly founded. The words of Demos were laughed at, the strikes disregarded.

The public phonographs of New York announced the arrival of the monarch. On the Stock Exchange floated the imperial standard above the national flag. At the Harlem the royal airship descended to within ten feet of the ground and sailed slowly down Columbus Avenue, through the Imperial Plaisance to Broadway, and thence to the Stock Exchange. The route was packed with millions of his subjects, straining their eyes to catch a glimpse of His Supreme Richness and filling the air with deafening hurrahs. Vangold sat in his ship, the

door open, smiling and bowing to right and left. It so chanced that at Madison Square Demos was delivering an oration. He saw the Emperor approach and pointing at him in a most impolite way, shouted: "Behold the monster whom you worship, his feet upon your necks—" which was certainly not true, for the royal feet were resting on a hassock—"See him as he rides above you, stuffed with his millions, crammed with the gold for which you have toiled."

"Down with him!" roared some Nobles, rushing on Demos threateningly. But, strange to say, a crowd of plebeians surrounded the orator, and while offering no violence, would not permit the Nobles to break through.

"Peace!" commanded Vangold, with his ringing metallic voice. "In my realm each is free to speak his mind. Young man," he said, addressing Demos personally, "speak your piece as you will, but don't contract bad manners and be vulgarly personal. It's very bad form." And the imperial airship moved on. Demos was staggered. He thought to have seen the Emperor's black eye distinctly wink at him, but dismissed the idea as impossible. Certainly his blue eye had remained wide open. The incident put him out and he could not continue orating for almost

twenty minutes, when he regained his voice and poured forth fresh eloquence.

Meanwhile the Emperor reached the Stock Exchange and was received by the Board of Governors, who all knelt in the Broad Street entrance. As he crossed the threshold the market rose another point, whereat he smiled. The Executive Council was to meet in the Board Room. At precisely noon Vangold assumed the chair and called the meeting to order. He was not now acting as Emperor, but as president of the Trust, so he took off his crown and laid it down on the desk before him. He at once made the following remarks:

"Gentlemen, this meeting has been called to confront a grave emergency. A party by the name of Demos has succeeded in raising a certain amount of Public Opinion"—(groans)—"against our financial system"—(groans). "A general strike has developed. Prices have declined. Gentlemen, prices must go up again"—(cheers)—"public opinion must be muzzled"—(cheers)—"strikes must be suppressed. Gentlemen, there is only one way on earth that I know of to put up prices and that is to buy"—(great cheers)—"I move that it is the sense of this meet-

ing that everybody buys everything, and woe to him who sells."—(Prolonged cheers.)

The motion was unanimously carried and prices jumped a couple of points. The Emperor showed himself on the floor of the Exchange and, just for example, personally bought a few thousand shares. The enthusiasm was immense. Still, certain shrewd old operators noticed that there was plenty of stuff for sale all the time, but the great mass of buyers would not listen to them. Predictions of a boom were heard everywhere. Unable to restrain himself and ashamed of having doubted Vangold, Porker flung up his helmet and shouted, "Long live the Emperor!" The crowd on the floor took up the cry, it spread to the street outside, it passed up Broadway, and from one end of the city to the other arose the roar of multitudes, "Long live the Emperor!"

"A pretty good day's work," thought Vangold as he re-entered his airship and flew to Washington. It was not much past fourteen o'clock when he again entered the palace. Prices were still rising, but Demos was still holding forth at Madison Square with unabated ardor and apparently quenchless voice. The lungs of Demos seemed exhaustless, but then the young man was talking against time, with a horrible fate now

only four days off unless he succeeded in his efforts. Who would not talk with such an incentive?—to say nothing of his passionate love of Liberty and his adoration of the Princess Sapphire, from whom that morning he had received words of hope. She had called him up before he had begun work for the day.

"Demos," she had said, "be of good cheer. Your speeches of late have been very powerful and are doing the job."

"I feel I have been real eloquent," he had answered, "but ten days is so short a time. If I could orate for ten years now——"

"Nonsense. No people in the world would stand it, my love. I, too, have been working. Have no fear. More I cannot say."

"That's very unsatisfactory."

"I know it, and am very sorry I cannot go further. But trust me—trust me."

"Have you been working your father?"

"Yes—that much I may say."

"And is the old gentleman more friendly?"

"Dearest, my lips are sealed."

"But this puts me in an awkward position."

"No, it doesn't. Go right on in the path you are treading. Orate more powerfully than ever, if possible."

"I fear that is not possible."

"Well, do your best. Good bye, dear. Aurea has come to fix my back hair."

And as we have seen with our own eyes and heard with our own ears, Demos had gone forth to thunder noble thoughts, and had actually bearded the lion in his airship. True, he had fancied the lion had winked at him, but surely that could not be.

However, he ate a hearty dinner, put in a good evening's work and retired to bed lighter of heart than he had been for some time. To be telephoned cheeringly was at least consoling when the voice that telephoned was the voice of true affection. He who loves, hopes.

CHAPTER XIV.

July the twenty-ninth, the Emperor held an auction sale of vacant offices. His explanation was that in all crises the first thing to do is to raise money. Enough vacancies existed to realize a handsome sum, and they were all to be thrown on the market. At these sales the right was reserved to reject any and all bids. The auction took place in the Throne-room of the palace, an immense chamber, in the decoration of which no expense had been spared. The throne itself stood on a dais supported by two golden life-size hogs. It was of most cunningly carven ivory, which at first sight seemed to represent bouquets of flowers, but closer examination showed that every leaf, bud and blossom was a facsimile of some coin of the Empire. The carver had exercised the utmost ingenuity in creating this pleasing illusion. Below the dais was a tribune for the official use of the Imperial Swineherd. Two handsome tables flanked the

tribune for the accommodation of reporters. The walls were hung with gorgeous tapestries, emblazoned with the imperial arms.

At twelve o'clock the Emperor ascended the throne and the Swineherd took possession of the tribune. A large number of Nobles were present, apparently in an unhappy frame of mind. In fact, the markets of the morning had developed alarming weakness. All the buoyancy of the preceding day had disappeared and prices were rapidly sinking. Vangold alone maintained his usual composure and attended strictly to the business in hand.

"Gentlemen," he said, "we have some very choice and desirable offices for sale to-day at reasonable terms. The assortment is large enough to suit any taste and I anticipate some lively bidding. First permit me to call your attention to the ambassadorship to the Court of St. James, a most attractive position, with a large salary and next to nothing to do. The social refinement to be acquired at that historic court, in quite a short time, is of particular value to a Noble who in the pursuit of wealth has not found leisure to properly polish himself. To all such I recommend this berth warmly. Other things being equal, I shall discriminate against men of

culture. Poets and literary persons are ineligible. Mr. Swineherd, put it up."

"What am I offered," cried Porker, "for the ambassadorship to Great Britain? Come, gentlemen, something to start with—don't be bashful. Do I hear a bid? What am I offered?"

Not a bid was heard—not a solitary bid. Thrice the Swineherd repeated his stentorian cry, but dead silence was the only response. It was incredible, unheard of, and Porker grew pale with fear. He looked at his master, but the face of Vangold was, as ever, unreadable, the faint smile, perhaps, tinged with contempt.

"They don't bid," gasped Porker.

"So it seems," replied the Emperor, calmly, "let us try them with something else."

"Gentlemen," he announced, "it does not seem to be a favorable day for embassies. A domestic article would, perhaps, be preferred. Allow me to offer you the Governorship of the Philippines. Need I dilate upon the many advantages of that office? Its patronage and perquisites in the hands of an industrious governor are valuable aids to a noble career. It has always and justly been held in the highest esteem by practical men with a turn for money making. It will probably

come high, but it will be worth every cent given for it. Now, Mr. Swineherd, put it up."

Thrice again the voice of Porker rang through the hall, and again deep silence followed his coaxing appeals. A cold sweat bedewed his portly person and in veritable terror he turned to Vangold, who sat upon his throne, politely imperturbable. The monarch glanced at the silent throng with something of disdain. He knew what the trouble was. The falling markets, the strikes and the agitation of Demos were doing their work. In the reaction from the enthusiastic outburst of the day before, men hesitated to buy anything, even offices. He saw the signs of the approaching panic with the sacred joy of the successful manipulator, but he gave no outward sign of his satisfaction. On the contrary he leaned over to Porker with an air of vexation, saying, "This is most peculiar. What do you think it means?"

"Your Supreme Richness," replied Porker, "it is a very alarming state of affairs. I am at a loss to account for it."

"Have you anything particularly choice to try them with?"

"There's a Chicago Aldermanship."

"The very thing. If they don't bite at that, we might as well quit."

"Gentlemen," he at once announced, "I now place before you an office of great dignity and remarkable utility—an office which is, perhaps, as sure a road to wealth and high preferment as any in the Empire—an office which requires no special preparation on the part of the incumbent, although previous experience in the liquor business does not hurt. It is a Chicago Aldermanship. In addition to other advantages, aldermen are now, by special statute, exempt from jail, a privilege of value upon which it is needless to expatiate. Mr. Swineherd, put it up."

Yet thrice again the voice of Porker rose and fell, but even the aldermanship attracted no bids. The Emperor rose to his feet.

"Gentlemen," he said, "I am forced to the conclusion that a spirit of disaffection is abroad. You certainly must admit that such offices as have been submitted to you are usually sold for good round sums. Why this apathy?"

"Your Supreme Richness," answered an aged Noble named Hustle Cage, "we are all men of means and have carefully studied your precepts and example. It looks as if there were danger ahead, and we are inclined to go slow."

"Danger?" repeated Vangold. "And if there be do you not owe me allegiance? Am I not your head and front? Would you leave me to fight alone and single-handed?"

"What would you do in our place?"

"The question is irrelevant. I couldn't possibly be in your place. But of one thing be assured. Danger to the Empire means ruin to you all. It is only by active, intelligent and unceasing co-operation that wealth can rule. Go forth, my friends, and buy—buy everything."

"We have bought," roared the noble throng.

"Buy more. Stretch your means to the limit, use your credit to the utmost. Remember that I, your Emperor, am still on top, and, permit me to add, extremely likely to remain so."

Once more the strange magnetism of the man subdued all opposition. Confidence was born again at the sound of the clear metallic voice. In the imperial presence to doubt seemed impossible, and the Nobles hastened to their offices eager to transmit purchasing orders to the various speculative centers. Thus did the dexterous Vangold turn the very dissatisfaction of his subjects to his personal profit, as with firm hand he made all currents flow toward the cataract of the coming catastrophe.

Accompanied by Porker and the secretaries, he repaired to the Cabinet room, at the door of which he found an aged negro waiting, of very venerable aspect. At the sight of the Emperor the old negro seemed overwhelmed with joy.

"Why, Massa Vangole," he cried, "Massa Vangole, de libin' image of yo' fader."

"Hallo! who are you?" asked the Emperor.

"Don' yo' know de ole man who so often nussed yo' in his arms an' tole yo' sto'ies ob de golebugs?"

"O, it's you, is it?" said the Emperor, not unkindly.

"Gentlemen, this is an old retainer, the custodian of the family farmhouse where my grandfather, the original Vangold, was born, and where he likewise died."

"How touching," murmured the others.

"By-the-bye, what's your name?" asked the Emperor.

"I'se done clean forgot, Massa Vangole. But I'se washed fo' Gen'l Washington and cooked fo' Gen'l Grant. Dey calls me de Oldest Inhabitant."

"We have frequently heard and read of you," said Porker. "How are Veritas, Pro Bono Pub-

lico, Constant Reader, and the rest of your interesting family?"

"Jests from our Swineherd are jests indeed," observed the Emperor playfully. "But what brings you here?" he asked of the negro.

"Jes' dis." And the Oldest Inhabitant extracted an ancient looking document from his pocket. "Las' night I wuz a-cleanin' out de chicken-coop in de back-yard. Yo' reklect it, Mass Vangole, de back-yard war yo' swallud de lit'l' gole dollar in play."

"I recollect it perfectly," said Vangold. "Childlike I swallowed the dollar, and, gentlemen, nothing they gave me could get it away from somewhere in my inside. I presume it is in me now."

"A touching, prophetic accident," said Marcanna.

"The question is, was I a dollar out or a dollar in?" And the Emperor motioned the negro to proceed.

"One of de boards ob de coop wuz loose, Massa Vangole. Underneaf it I foun' dis yah papah." He handed the document to the Emperor.

"Why, what is this?" said Vangold, examining the paper. "Goodness gracious! It is my

father's will. He was supposed to have died intestate."

He ran his eyes rapidly down the sheet and his parti-colored face grew dusky. For a moment he seemed seized with uncontrollable fear. "Accursed Demos! accursed chicken-coop!" he muttered.

"Can you read?" he asked the negro, dragging him out of earshot of the others.

"No."

"Have you shown this to anyone?"

"No."

"Good."

Whatever the emotion was that agitated him, he now mastered it. Turning to Porker and the secretaries he said, "Gentlemen, excuse me. A voice, as it were, from the grave, is affecting."

They murmured their sympathy, for which he thanked them. Then he summoned a guard and committed the negro to his charge, with strict instructions to conduct him to the farmhouse at once by airship, and to allow him to talk to no one. The negro gone, they all entered the Cabinet room.

"Gentlemen," said the Emperor, "it is time to stop this crisis. Three days hence Demos dies. He will be in Washington Monday night. Arrest

him on arrival—let no one communicate with him—execute him at the first legal minute possible. Porker, you will make instant preparations. No other business will be considered till this job is done."

Accepting this as a dismissal, Porker and the secretaries took their departure and the Emperor retired to his private office. Once there, he read the will over carefully and then, strange to say, placed it in the breast pocket of his coat. Why he did not destroy it is inexplicable. Perhaps there was a certain fascination in thus playing with fate, perhaps he was so preoccupied that the action was mechanical. Denying himself to everyone, he sat intently thinking, balancing in his mind the various phases of the immense intrigue he was directing. Decision came at last, yet evidently with reluctance, for these words escaped his lips: "My poor Sapphire."

CHAPTER XV.

July the thirtieth was Sunday and Porker spent it at home. He was highly delighted at the positive orders he had received regarding Demos. He now felt sure that the young man was the origin of all the existing disturbances, and the prospect of his early demise was soothing. With Demos out of the way, he reflected, things would speedily return to their normal channels, prices would revive, public opinion be squelched and the Empire move serenely on the old footing. So pleasant were these thoughts that when evening came the good man fairly bubbled into gayety and cracked ponderous jokes in the bosom of his family. Aurea did not fail to notice this change in her father's mood.

"Dear papa," she asked, "is the boycott on you raised?"

"Not yet."

"O—you seemed so merry—I thought, perhaps——"

"A man may be boycotted and yet be merry, may he not?"

"I cannot say. Merriment and I have so long parted company that I am no judge."

The dear girl's voice was saturated with sadness. It was easy to see that her thoughts were far away. Porker was annoyed.

"Look here, Miss," he said, "I want this fooling to stop. I suppose the Princess has been encouraging you in your silly notions. Well, she will have to take her medicine, too. Her precious Demos will be exterminated in about twenty-four hours."

"O, papa, you don't mean it?"

"I certainly do."

"Why, she was sure the Emperor would relent."

"Well, he won't. As for your preposterous affinity, I'll run him in at once."

Aurea fainted. Summoning proper assistance, her father went his way. When she revived, her first impulse was to seek her adored Bill and put him on his guard.

That man of theoretical violence was eating his modest Sunday meal of sausages and beer at his accustomed abiding-place. About him discussion ran high on current events. He listened to the

flow of talk with benevolent tolerance. It seemed to be the general impression that Demos was doing good work for the cause. The young disciple whom we have previously met was loud in praise, and spoke of Demos as a pioneer blazing the way through the forest of Prejudice to the smiling lands of Anarchy. Loud cheers greeted the young disciple's effort.

"Brothers," said Bill, at last, "brothers, you are on the wrong tack. If Demos succeeds, we exchange the rule of millions for the rule of the farmer and the artisan, who firmly believe that men like us should work for a living. We should still be very much left—we who are starving—" here he choked on a rather large piece of sausage he was trying to swallow while talking, and was only brought to by a copious libation. "We who are starving," he continued, "can find plenty in but one way, and that way is pure and simple Anarchy. By excessive labor, which is fraud, many men have accumulated things that we should like to have. Anarchy gives us the right to take those things. O, my brethren, how beautiful is Anarchy! armed with dynamite, anointed with petroleum, clothed in holy rags and tatters. Her right hand threatens while her left hand appropriates, or *vice versa.* The glorious mis-

sionary work to be done by one small bomb is only surpassed by that which can be done by two small bombs, or more. Be not led astray by false prophets, but diligently shoot, burn, explode, and otherwise remove the wretches who pile up property. Always shall my voice be lifted up, always shall I egg ye on—I, the terror of tyrants. Vive l'Anarchie!"

Deafening hurrahs followed this impassioned peroration, during which Bill passed round the hat and gathered in a modest number of small coins. It was collection day and he had to rise to the occasion. While he was counting the sum realized the widow entered and informed him that Aurea was in the parlor and desirous of immediate speech with him, whereupon he hastened upstairs.

As he entered the room, Aurea's face lit up with a curious mixture of joy and fear. Pipe in mouth, and puffing heavily, he maintained a surly composure. She clasped her hands and bent her head in an imploring attitude. He had forbidden her at any time to talk to him without his permission. Motioning her to him, he chucked her under the chin. It was the only familiarity that ever passed between them, and it was the sign that she might speak.

"Perplexing thing," she murmured, "accept anew my adoration."

"Stop it!" said the Anarchist. "If that's all you've got to say, good-bye." And he turned as if to leave.

"But it isn't all—I came to warn you."

"None of your little games, now."

"Indeed it is no little game. Father has threatened to run you in at once."

She could not have hit him in a more tender spot, for the one thing that the Anarchist most dreaded was being run in. The very phrase itself had a police flavor to it which drove the color from his face and made his knees knock together.

"What have I done," he whined, "that I should be run in? This is a free country, isn't it? I'm a peaceful man, ain't I? It's all along of you! Curse the day you hoodooed me! Why can't you let me alone?" And he went on growling under his breath, while his eyes squinted malevolently at the fair girl.

"O, ugly, yet attractive darling," she exclaimed, "don't look at me that way! Really, I'm not to blame. It's all because of Demos."

"I'm not responsible for Demos."

"But he's to be executed and you're to be run in."

"It's a shame, a burning shame—it's cruelty to a harmless man—that's what it is. Something must be done."

"But what?"

"Is the Princess on to it?"

"I don't know."

"You must see her at once. What in thunder are women good for anyhow, except to keep us out of scrapes? You're always blowing about your devotion. Suppose you do something. Me run in? What an outrage!"

His anger actually overcame his fear, as he glared indignantly at the fascinated Aurea, who, overcome by mixed emotions, sank upon her knees before him and would fain have kissed his hands.

"Not much," said Bill, crossing those unwashed members behind his burly back. "You get me out of this and maybe I'll let you. You go to the Princess, and be mighty quick about it. I'll wait in the garden until you come back. If I'm run in before you return, that ends it. See?"

"If they run you in," she cried, "I'll run you out! Love laughs at police stations! Revolting, yet resistless paradox, I fly to save you!"

Aurea sped to the palace, leaving Bill to lurk in the garden—a prey to fearful forebodings.

Every shadow seemed to him cast by a helmet or a club; the little whispers of the wind reverberated in his ears like echoes of official voices—so truly terrible to an Anarchist is the sound, the sight, the thought, the hint of the tyrannous Police. But all was quiet, nothing broke the stillness of the summer night, save the clocks that rang out twenty-four, ushering in July the thirty-first.

CHAPTER XVI.

Sapphire listened to Aurea's disclosures with incredulity. She believed herself entirely conversant with her father's plans, and thought the order for the execution of Demos must be part of the comedy he was playing. Still, anything affecting her lover moved her to uneasiness and she determined to seek her father at once. Bidding Aurea await her return she went to the Emperor's private office. The monarch was alone and extremely busy at his switchboard.

"Can you grant me a few minutes?" she asked.

"Always," he replied, kindly, turning on his revolving chair and facing her.

"I have just learned that you have ordered the execution of Demos for to-morrow."

"Yes, I have."

"Of course you don't mean it?"

He looked at her intently, trying to read her emotions. He confessed to himself his inability to correctly value a woman's love. Of course it must have its price, but data and quotations were

lacking. Skilled trader as he was in the passions of men, he had never bothered with the sentiments of women—an oversight which he now regretted. It distressed him to see anxiety flash into the lovely face before him as the Princess awaited his reply. Finally she repeated her question:

"Of course you don't mean it?"

"Yes," he said at last, slowly, "I do mean it."

"Father!"

He fairly winced at the horror and the indignation of the cry, at the mingled anger and contempt which flamed from the great gray eyes so steadily regarding him. Was he, the mighty multi-millionaire, the imperial arbiter of fortune, to be judged by this girl, the issue of his own loins? Not without an effort. She, too, must have her price and he was perfectly willing to pay it in any way but one. She stirred his pride and commanded his respect. He would treat with her as an equal. Surely she would understand.

"Sapphire," he began, and there was a slight waver in the clear metallic voice—"Sapphire, you shall have an explanation. Listen carefully."

"I will listen."

She stood so still and white that only the slow heaving of her breast and the fierce glitter of her eyes proclaimed her living—an image of the re-

pose of wrath. The little bells on the switchboard suddenly jangled. The Princess, surcharged with electricity and without her glass chemiloon, was running over.

"My dear child," cried Vangold, "restrain yourself. You will spoil my apparatus."

She quickly stepped upon a square of glass, provided for such emergencies, and the currents of her body thus suddenly intercepted broke for a moment into a myriad sparks that played about her like an aurora.

"Proceed," she remarked.

"My daughter," said the Emperor, "our bargain of some ten days since was made on my part in entire good faith. I was then perfectly willing that your young man should live. But circumstances alter cases."

"Not love cases," she interrupted.

"I am not prepared to grant that, although I admit ignorance on the point to some extent. But let that pass. A certain fact came to my knowledge yesterday which makes the existence of Demos a vital menace to me. There is no longer room for both of us. I am forced, in self-defence, to put an end to him."

"What have you learned?"

"I prefer to keep that private. But this much

I will tell you—if he knew what I know, my entire fortune would be imperilled. I should actually be liable to poverty. You and I would become plebeians."

"As you are about to abdicate and restore the Republic, there will be no more plebeians."

"Under the present circumstances I cannot abdicate. An exterminated Demos means the continuance of the Empire."

"And your great deal?"

"I must abandon it. I can cover my line of shorts at a small profit or a small loss and actively lead the bull campaign. True, my wretched Nobles will be further enriched, but I can bide my time and dump them later on."

Her keen and rational share in this conversation pleased the Emperor. He had feared tears and pleadings. Argument agreed with him.

"Of course," he resumed, "it will be an unpleasant wrench for you, but I am preserving your future as well as my own. As my sole heiress you will inevitably become Empress some day, but prove to me that you are a worthy child of mine, make no fuss about your young man, and you need not wait for my demise, which is probably a long way off, but you shall from this day share my riches and my rank. I will pro-

claim you joint ruler with imperial titles and power."

Never before, in the history of the world, had such a stupendous bribe been offered. Surely he had made an acceptable bid.

"I refuse," she said.

"Why?" he asked, in dismayed astonishment.

"Because I love."

"O, tut, tut!" said Vangold, now thoroughly put out, "that is all nonsense, you know. I have been making inquiries of competent authorities lately. Great scientists tell me that love is an animal instinct which dies quickly from gratification, rather more slowly from neglect. Eminent realistic novelists say that it is purely a matter of habit or heredity. Certain philosophers deny the existence of love, deeming it an imagination of egotism. Physicians admit its existence, but diagnose it as a sporadic disease of the nerves susceptible to easy treatment. Fools and poets alone hug the delusion. Love is a chimera."

"Love is life," said Sapphire.

"Nonsense. Accept my offer and you will soon get over that little episode."

"Father, I shall never get over it. With every breath, with every pulse I yearn for him unutterably. To lose him is to blot the stars from the

sky, to wither the flowers from the field, to make of me an empty battery, a currentless magnet."

With this she broke into passionate sobbing and the color came surging to her cheeks. She swayed and would have fallen but Vangold caught her and supported her.

"Father," she implored, "hear this, my last appeal. Let him be mine. For, O, I love him so!"

"I'm extremely sorry, but it is out of the question."

She tore herself from him in a sudden transport of fury.

"He shall not die!" she cried; "I will save him!"

Vangold smiled pityingly. He was really grieved that she would not be reasonable, but he was not to be moved. There was a knock at the door. It was a message from Porker asking that he might have immediate audience on important business. Knowing that he would not be disturbed at such an hour without good cause the Emperor decided to see him.

"You are in no condition to meet company," he said to Sapphire; "I will receive him outside and return as soon as I can." With which he left the office, closing the door behind him.

In great crises it often happens that the in-

tellect becomes paralyzed, leaving dumb instinct regnant. Sapphire looked vacantly about the room as if salvation for her lover were a material thing to be found within its walls. The furniture, the electric fittings, everything, seemed to possess a curious interest to her. Suddenly her gaze was riveted on the sliding steel grating that barred the airshaft. Some idea seemed to be trying to force recognition. She stood beneath the shaft and looked up. A single star was visible, very clear and bright, as if a friendly eye were watching from the outer heavens. As she saw it the struggling idea leaped to life. Her face grew luminous with hopeful daring. She ran to the door and turned the key, securing privacy, and again examined the grating. It was some fourteen feet from the floor. How to reach it? A rapid glance at the available furniture showed there was no help in that direction, but the grating must be gained. A woman's wits, afire with love, would make a bridge of a moonbeam or a ladder of a cobweb. Like lightning she whipped off her wrapper and tore it into strips, from which she improvised a rope nearly twenty feet long, to one end of which she attached a small paper weight. With careful aim she threw the weighted end at the grating. At the third attempt she

was successful. The weight passed over one of the bars and dropped on the other side. She caught it as it fell and tied the two ends of her strips together. She now had a rope of nearly ten feet hanging from the grating. To go up it hand over hand was, for Sapphire, a simple gymnasium exercise, and in less time than it takes to tell, she was at the grating. Supporting herself on her left hand, with her right hand she slid back the massive bolt that held the bars in place. Would they slide easily? To test it, she now hung from the center bar, as from a trapeze, and began swinging to and fro with increasing rapidity, a vaulting vision of loveliness.

O, Demos, what wert thou, or what were any mere man, to inspire such devotion? Look at the eager face with eyes intent and lips firm set, at the lithe strong arms, bare to the shoulder, at the visibly straining, panting bosom, at the Diana limbs, at the whole fair form alive with rushing rhythmic motion—look and marvel!—look, and worship!

Faster and faster she flew until having acquired sufficient momentum, she flung her body upward and struck her feet against the furthest of the bars facing her. At the shock the grating rolled open. It was evidently in working order.

Reversing her position she at once reshut the grating and slid to the floor. She quickly got possession of her rope and then collapsed with dismay. It had suddenly occurred to her that she was without a dress. Unlocking and opening the door of the office, she timidly peeped out. No one was in sight. Gathering her scanty draperies about her, and hugging her rope, she scurried through the hallways leading to her own apartments, and burst in upon Aurea.

"My goodness!" cried that startled young lady, "what have you been doing to yourself?"

"Aurea, if it were a question between your own papa and your lover, would you hesitate?" asked Sapphire, breathlessly.

"The girl who would not sacrifice her own papa on the altar of true love would certainly be a heartless wretch," replied Aurea.

"Sacrifice?"

"Certainly. I would deem it proper to sacrifice a thousand papas to gain one fleeting smile from my atrocious but irresistible Bill."

"You dear, good girl, what a comfort you are."

She hurriedly unfolded her plot to Aurea and then flew to her telephone to communicate with Demos. O, horror! The instrument was out of

order and would not work—and time was so precious. "I must go to him," she cried.

"Your father will find it out."

"He must not do so. I must travel in disguise. Let me think."

To think was to act. Aurea must accompany her. Both must wear male apparel—the costumes of young Nobles. Fortunately she had several suits which had been used in private theatricals.

"Of course we must cut off our hair," she said.

"O, I couldn't think of it," cried Aurea, "it's so very unfashionable."

"If we succeed, we shall set the fashion," was the convincing reply. This gained Aurea's acquiescence.

The scissors did their work. A close-cropped golden head soon nodded to an equally close-cropped black head.

"Doesn't it feel funny?" asked Aurea.

"I haven't time to think how it feels."

The suits were produced and put on, the cloaks adjusted as skilfully as could be to hide all rounded outlines, and never did two more charming gallants sally forth, on high adventure bent.

As they left the palace a thought struck the Princess.

"There's your hideous affinity—a person so

repulsive would make an excellent escort. Would he go with us?"

"He would do anything for a cash consideration."

"Can you find him at this hour?"

"Certainly. In fact he is waiting for me. I didn't like to mention it before—you seemed so busy."

They hastened toward the widow's premises.

The Anarchist was still in the garden, a prey to dreadful uneasiness. When he saw two forms approach and heard his name called he was sure his time had come. With a laudable desire to conciliate his captors, he stepped forward to meet them.

"Bear witness," he remarked, "that I offer no resistance. On such occasions I am a man of peace."

"How delightfully unpleasant," said Aurea admiringly.

"Coward!" said Sapphire, contemptuously.

His stupefaction on discovering the identity of his visitors had for a moment deprived him of speech, but at the word "coward" he revolted.

"You don't know what you are talking about," he said. "I thought you were policemen."

"And if we had been?"

"I should have been run in! 'Tis an awful doom—the ever present nightmare of all Anarchists."

He fished out a much-soiled handkerchief and mopped his brow. Sapphire explained to him that she wished him to accompany them to New York to seek Demos, offering him reasonable pay for his time.

"Are you out for a lark?" he asked, with a villainous wink.

"Miserable wretch!" cried the Princess, "it is a matter of life or death."

"Dearest," murmured Aurea, "it is only his painfully playful wit."

On ascertaining that he was not to run any personal danger, and stipulating that he should retain the privilege of instant flight from policemen, he consented to join the party.

It was now past two in the morning. They repaired to the nearest public airship station and found that the next ship flew at three o'clock. Reserving seats in that conveyance, they passed the intervening hour as best they could. The Anarchist, at the lunch counter, poured in a steady stream of beer at the expense of the Princess. Aurea watched him with frightened fascination. Sapphire walked restlessly to and fro,

impatient of the slightest delay, distracted with doubts, yet buoyed up with hope. In her masculine dress one could detect in her a vague likeness to the Emperor, not in form or feature certainly, but in that intangible something which for lack of a better name is called family resemblance. Like her father, she seemed to breathe an atmosphere of command and confidence. Maidenly diffidence had vanished with her robes. She was ready to challenge, to combat, to conquer.

Three o'clock came at last. There were some fifty passengers besides our party. The electric trumpet sounded, the great flanges revolved, they shot far up into the summer night, cleaving the air with wings of lightning.

CHAPTER XVII.

Demos had listened to the midnight chimes with a certain uneasiness. But twenty-four hours of liberty were now left to him. His word was pledged to appear before the Emperor on the first of August, and what would be his fate? Would an aroused and enlightened public opinion force the monarch to do him justice? He dared not hope it. True, his speeches were now received with respect and widely advertised. His autograph was assiduously sought for, invitations to dinners and other social functions poured in on him, photographers took his pictures free of cost, managers of theatres sent him boxes and he had been invited to umpire a game of baseball. Social eminence he had attained, but how did that help? He could not see that his apostleship had produced any practical results. The Empire, splendid and impregnable, granted him good-humored tolerance. He was, of course, ignorant of the vast machinations of Vangold, who had

secretly supported him while preparing his great coup.

Then he thought of Sapphire, and of the vague hopes she had persistently encouraged. Might she not be mistaken? Might not her father be deluding her to avoid trouble and keep peace in the family? Such suspicions of the Emperor were not unwarrantable, and if true, they meant death—sudden, official and ignominious death. Surely he was in an unpleasantly awkward fix.

He had recourse to his telephone, but could get no response. His instrument was all right; it was Sapphire's which was out of order. Bed was not to be thought of, and he paced his room restlessly; guilty, even, of doubting the Princess. Why was she silent? Had she, too, forsaken him? Time sped on all too swiftly for the poor youth who, as each hour struck, could not but ask himself, "Shall I ever hear it again?" He felt that he could be very heroic before others, but heroism is difficult to cultivate when all alone, in the dead of night, in a hotel bed-room. Most heroes demand audiences.

About ten minutes past three there came a knock at his door.

"Who's there?" he cried.

"I."

"Who is 'I'?"

"Open the door, quick—that is, if you are presentable."

He turned the key and a very fashionably dressed young Noble jumped in, closing the door behind him. Demos felt that this was something of a liberty.

"Explain this intrusion, sir," he said sternly.

"O! you don't know me?"

"Certainly not."

The young Noble removed his hat, disclosing to the astonished Demos the adorable face of Sapphire. With a cry of delight he pressed her to his breast and kissed her yielding lips. For a little space no words passed between them. It was enough to look, to touch, to embrace. Then the strangeness of her attire struck him, and the absence of her beautiful, thick hair. He laid his hand softly on the short sunny curls, so charmingly piquant and boy-like. His eyes ran over the cloak, the coat, the breeches, the boots—good heavens! had he fallen into a doze? Was this a tantalizing dream from which he must awaken? If so, he would make hay while the sun shone, and he clasped her to him so roughly that she uttered a little cry of pain, which brought him to his senses.

"It is really you, then?"

"It is really I."

Her eyes were brilliant with excitement, her cheeks were glowing. To look at her was an inspiration; to hear her, an intoxication; to kiss her, a delirium. She was love incarnate. At the thought that he might lose her, Demos grew enraged and fell to raving. Yes, he would have her at any cost, he would fly with her beyond the Emperor's power, he would fling his mission and his honor to the dogs. She must be his, and the maddened youth flung himself down before her, clasping her by the knees, kissing her very boots, and behaving altogether in an utterly absurd fashion.

"Be reasonable," she said, with a touch of pity in her voice. "Should I be here and masquerading thus, unless it were to save you?"

He jumped to his feet with a great oath that shocked her. He cursed the Empire, he cursed his mission, he even cursed Liberty. O! do not blame him. The wisest and the greatest of mankind have had such hours and the world forgives them—nay, admires them. Paris wars for Helen, Leander braves the Hellespont, Abelard suffers nameless ignominy, Antony throws away a world, and not a man, and still more not a woman, but

feels for them a secret admiration and a sneaking sympathy. So let our poor Demos be pardoned his rude outburst, for he, too, was burning with the sacred fire.

She waited till his fit of fury had spent itself. Then she said, "You shall win me, love, if you will; and you shall fulfill your mission."

"But how?"

"That is what I have come to tell you."

He listened eagerly to her story and she told him all—how the Emperor had been secretly abetting him and why—how he had intended to abdicate and permit their marriage—how he had suddenly changed his mind for some unknown but evidently very potent reason—and of his present inflexible determination that Demos must die.

"We had better make a run for it," said Demos.

"That would be foolish. Wherever we went his arms are long enough to reach us. I have thought of a most simple but effective plan."

"And that is?"

"To kidnap papa."

Genius goes straight to the point, because genius is simplicity. Demos was dumfounded at so easy a solution of his troubles.

"Can he be kidnapped?" he asked.

She explained to him the construction of the Emperor's office and how it could be reached by the air-shaft. She told him how she had climbed to the grating and slid back the bolt. There was not one chance in a thousand that its displacement would be observed.

"You did that—and for me?"

"For whom else should I?"

The enraptured youth could find no answer save the mute eloquence of love's caresses. As soon as he would allow it, she let him know that Aurea and the Anarchist were downstairs and that it would be well for them to assist in the conspiracy. They were sent for and came right up. Demos felt no surprise when he saw Aurea as a slim and elegant young cavalier. He was past being surprised and was strangely elated, as if he had been drinking champagne.

"Ha!" said the Anarchist, with a sardonic chuckle. "Do you realize that this is your last day?"

"Possibly."

"Is it a comfortable sensation?"

"My memory will survive, you know."

"There's nothing in it."

"No," said Aurea. "One cannot marry mem-

ory, or kiss memory, or sit on memory's lap." And she gazed sympathizingly at the Princess.

"You'd better apply to me," said Bill. "I deal in the universal panacea for social and personal ills, warranted to remove policemen, judges, emperors, or anything, in a jiffy. A pound or two is enough to reform a nation. It's the stuff! the glorious stuff! Hurrah for dynamite!"

"Your methods are unspeakably vile," replied Demos. "Yet even you may be of use. Will you assist in a conspiracy?"

"Ha! ha! Will I assist? Haven't I been conspiring all my life? What are you giving me?"

"O, roaring, noble heart!" murmured Aurea.

"It is proposed to kidnap the Emperor," said Demos.

"Hold on!" Bill interjected, "do I run any bodily risk?"

"Certainly."

"Then count me out."

"What mean, yet seemly, prudence," said Aurea.

"What ruffianly cowardice," cried Sapphire. "Refuse to aid us and with my own hands I will turn you over to the authorities who, to my certain knowledge, are looking for you."

Placed between two fires, the Anarchist weak-

ened. He consented to become an active conspirator, with the reservation that Demos should at all times take the lead and that at the first sign of personal danger he, Bill, should be at liberty to take to the woods. This was the best that could be done with him.

"It's all rot," he summed up, "a little bit of dynamite is the proper thing. I'll furnish the stuff if you'll use it."

"Never!" cried Demos. "Explosives are the weapons of the coward. Kidnapping is legitimate warfare."

It was settled that they should wait till evening and fly to Washington in Demos' airship. None of them, meanwhile, would leave the hotel. A room was secured for the Anarchist and one for the Princess and Aurea. The disguise of the girls was so perfect that whatever search might be made they had no fear of discovery.

It was now nearly five o'clock, and in view of the work ahead, rest and sleep were essential. Bill marched off, disdaining Aurea's attempt to bid him good-night, and Demos escorted the ladies to their apartment.

"Be of good heart," said Sapphire, as he left them.

"I drink at the fountain of courage," he answered, with a farewell kiss.

The girls retired quickly and Sapphire soon fell asleep. Aurea, however, was wakeful and lay watching her companion. All at once she was startled to feel the Princess' arms about her neck. A smile of ineffable tenderness lit up the slumbering face. The closed eyes were dewy with a trace of tears. Her lips sought Aurea's and clung to them, as she whispered in her dream, "O, my love, my lord!" Aurea lay perfectly still, smiling curiously.

CHAPTER XVIII.

When the Emperor returned to his office and found Sapphire gone, he was not displeased. Strife with his daughter was unpleasant to him. He reflected that a night's rest would do her no harm and perhaps tend to bring her to a more reasonable frame of mind. Acquaintance with the inevitable softens its terrors. Moreover, he had much to do. His enormous interest in the world's markets could not be suddenly changed; the operation must be a long and continuous one. He set about the preliminary movements at once, and it was six in the morning before he sought rest. Even Vangold was subject to the imperious laws of nature and it was noon before he awakened to a very busy day. He found the markets, under the influence of his orders, absolutely stagnant—there was nothing to trouble him in that direction. He discharged a number of imperial duties which consumed the better part of the afternoon. He then gave consideration to the question of the millions of men who were to arrive in Washington the following day to demand

the restoration of the republic. After deep thought, he decided to let them come acording to programme. He would turn their presence into an ovation to himself by the lavish distribution of money. In the scenes that would ensue the execution of Demos would be overlooked.

About eighteen o'clock he received a visit from Porker, who came to report that all was in order for Demos' removal.

"Very good," said the monarch, "the young man will doubtless arrive to-night. If he doesn't come of his own free will, have him arrested and brought here. But wait till midnight. I have no fear of his disappointing us. He is a punctual and honorable youth."

When he sat down to dinner he enquired after Sapphire. He was told that she had been absent from the palace all day and had left no word of her whereabouts.

"She has fled to her lover," was his immediate conclusion. Hastily swallowing his meal he went to his office and telephoned to New York. A full report of Demos' doings was transmitted to him. He had spent the day as usual—had made a couple of powerful speeches and was at that moment dining with two young Nobles. It was certain that no woman had called upon him.

"She cannot communicate with him by telephone," he thought. "I had her instrument spoiled on purpose."

Much perturbed, he had the description and picture of Sapphire transmitted throughout the Empire, with instructions to report to him the moment she was discovered. The horrible suspicion of suicide flashed through his mind, but he dismissed it at once. No Vangold would be guilty of so foolish an act, or if she were so insane she would wait till all hope were gone. "She is trying to devise some scheme to save him," he said to himself. "Poor child—what a useless struggle. She will return when it is all over and I will study how to make her reparation."

He remained in his office hard at work. Evening fell, but it made no difference to him. His office was alike at all hours. With indefatigable ardor he pursued his labors, the great brain working clearly and precisely, for he never allowed anything to interfere with business.

About twenty-one o'clock a small airship stopped at a considerable height above the palace. Telescopic scrutiny showed that the roof was deserted and Sapphire indicated to Demos the exact location of the airshaft. The ship dropped

silently down. Demos alighted at the mouth of the shaft and peered through it.

"Is there a light?" whispered Sapphire.

"Yes."

"Listen."

Demos listened intently. Soon he heard the Emperor's voice, very faint but quite distinct. He was evidently telephoning. This is what Demos heard:

"You say that the young man left with an Anarchist and two Nobles?"

A pause.

"One of the Nobles was my daughter?"

A pause.

"Who says so?"

A pause.

"Then the identification was positive?"

A pause.

"Notify all imperial airships. Surround Washington. Arrest the whole party, wherever found."

Click! The instrument was hung up.

Without an instant's hesitation Demos, waving his hand to Sapphire, began the descent of the fixed ladder. He had taken the precaution to remove his boots and he went down as noiselessly as a cat. He reached the grating and peeped in.

Vangold was sitting at his desk, his back toward the young man. In the twinkling of an eye Demos rolled the grating open, leaped to the floor and jumped, panther-like, upon the monarch.

"One outcry and you are a dead man!" he fiercely whispered.

Then he discovered a strange thing. Vangold was a physical coward. He shook like a leaf and the color fled from his face, leaving his parti-colored cheeks ghastly to look at. For some seconds his teeth chattered and he was bereft of speech. Then the superb will reassumed dominion over the trembling flesh and with imperial resolution he confronted the emergency.

"I am ready to deal with you," he said.

"I am obliged to tie you up first," said Demos, producing cords, with which he bound the Emperor's hands and feet.

"What do you propose to do?"

"To kidnap you."

"You can never get me up that ladder."

"I have assistants."

Demos went to the bottom of the shaft and cried, "All's well," the agreed signal. Down came the Anarchist, followed by Sapphire and Aurea, who wore masks.

"Ha!" roared Bill, "at last I gaze upon a pros-

trate monarch. Wretched tyrant! bloated bondholder! golden scum! I spit upon you! Prepare for the vengeance of Anarchy!" And he danced a rude unwieldy measure about the Emperor.

"Silence!" said Demos. "Respect a fallen foe."

"He doesn't respect me," retorted the Anarchist. "If he could he would run me in." And he shook his fist under the Emperor's nose.

There was not the slightest expression on Vangold's face as he watched Bill, whom Demos now thrust aside, much to Sapphire's relief. She, with Aurea, had retired to the other end of the office. No doubt the Emperor guessed the identity of his daughter, but he gave no sign.

"Sir," said Demos to him, "I assure you I have no sympathy with this riotous person. It is with sincere regret that I am forced to use violence. But put yourself in my place. I am sure you would follow a similar line of conduct."

"You are acting quite naturally," answered Vangold, calmly. "Every man for himself."

"And the devil take the hindmost," growled the Anarchist.

"My friend," said the Emperor to Bill, "our systems of philosophy are in the main identical, only heretofore I have not been the hindmost. At the present time I certainly occupy that un-

pleasant position. Permit me to remark that I am very sensitive to the odor of garlic. You would much oblige me by retiring a few feet."

His cheerful audacity quite flustered the Anarchist, who instinctively obeyed.

"Of course," he went on, addressing Demos, "you have the upper hand. When cornered you will find me a very reasonable person to deal with. Sensible people yield under proper pressure. Now to business. You, of course, wish to live."

"I do."

"Very good. I grant you your life. You probably desire to wed my daughter?"

"It is my dearest hope."

"Good again. You shall have her."

"But that is not enough."

"Young man," said the Emperor severely, "beware of the vice of avarice."

"It is not enough," repeated Demos.

"O, suppose I throw in a lump sum—let us say a million."

He spoke authoritatively, as if he were on his throne and not at all like a bound captive.

"You misunderstand," said Demos, "and you ignore my sacred mission. Freedom must be restored to the American people."

"Tut, tut! Don't talk nonsense.'

"I am in very serious earnest. Refuse my conditions and you will be carried up that shaft to my airship and taken to a spot I know of in Alaska, where I shall keep you until you come to terms."

"Let me think a few minutes."

"Certainly."

Demos joined Sapphire and Aurea. The monarch ran the situation over rapidly in his mind. It was very critical. To be carried to Alaska might mean ruin. There was no telling what might happen in his absence. Porker and his followers might seize the opportunity to corner the markets, which would strip him of all he possessed. He must at least appear to yield. On the other hand, Demos, powerful and free, would be a perpetual menace to him, which he could not endure. He must temporize, gain time, and trust to his wit to extricate himself from this predicament. But accident cut his meditations short.

Bill, left alone near the helpless Emperor, could not restrain his anarchistic tendencies and proceeded to pick his pockets. He was disgusted at the meagre yield. Less than four dollars in cash, a dilapidated pen-knife and a gold toothpick were all he found. Vangold had disdained to pay any

attention to the marauder, but when the anarchist fished out a certain document from the breast pocket of the imperial coat he was much disturbed.

"I protest!" he cried. "Return that document to me at once!"

It was his father's will. The anarchist rapidly ran over the document.

"Hallo!" he shouted to Demos, "have you a chestnut on your left collar-bone?"

"I have. My father stamped it there in infancy."

"Then listen to this."

"I object," interposed Vangold.

"Overruled," said Demos.

The anarchist read:

"This is the last will and testament of Vangold, Senior. A careful study of the courts has convinced me that wills properly drawn and deposited in fit places are inevitably broken. An equally careful study of contemporaneous fiction and the stage has convinced me that wills eccentrically drawn and deposited in out-of-the-way places invariably turn up at the right moment. I shall deposit this copy under the chicken-coop in the back-yard. I shall deposit a duplicate in a yet more secret place which I shall not here

disclose. May both be found. My son is acquainted with the fact that my wealth is not my own. I hold it in stewardship for another party who will rise up under the name of 'Demos,' and who will bear upon his left collar-bone the imprint of a chestnut——"

Here Demos snatched the will from the anarchist and read on in silence. It was quite plain. He was the real owner of the Vangold millions if the will were valid. How the situation arose is to this day a mystery. Imperfect records have been found of certain transactions between the grandfather of Demos and the father of Vangold. The latter probably made his peculiar will as a salve to his conscience, thinking it unlikely to ever turn up. The duplicate copy mentioned has never been found. Demos' name would imply that his father had some inkling of the state of affairs, as also the imprint of the chestnut.

"So all your wealth is mine," said the youth to Vangold.

"I am not prepared to concede the point."

"But this will?"

"May not be worth the paper it is written on. Besides, you die in a few hours and under the laws of the Empire I am the heir of all persons who die intestate."

"You forget that you are in my power."

The Emperor smiled. "You have wasted time," he said. "By now the imperial air-fleet encircles the capital. You can never break through. I shall be rescued."

The anarchist took a small object from his trousers' pocket and proffered it to Demos—"Partner," he said, "finish the job. This is a clockwork bomb."

"Never," cried Demos. "If I must die I will die—but not intestate."

"I shall take care that you make no will."

"I herewith make a verbal will, before competent witnesses. I bequeath all I own to the American people."

"Bah! How could such a will be enforced?"

"By the force I have awakened and that will grow—Public Opinion."

"Which I will lead in your place if you are slain!" cried Sapphire, flinging her mask away and coming to Demos, who placed his arm about her waist.

They formed a pretty picture as they fronted the Emperor. He, strong and sturdy, the son of the plain people; she, cultured and refined, the daughter of the rich; both roused to noble purpose at the voice of love.

"So you are of the enemy," said Vangold to his daughter, with a touch of sadness.

"O, father! listen to the voice of love!"

Again the Emperor thought long and hard. He could restore an immense fortune to Demos and still, by carrying out his original plans in the markets, remain the richest of all. At least, Porker and the Nobles would be bankrupt, which was a very consoling thought.

Demos went to him and untied the cords which bound him, throwing them away.

"Sir," he said, "you are free to do as you please."

The faint habitual smile returned to the Emperor's face. He walked to the telephone and ordered Porker and the Cabinet to report to him at once.

"I have decided upon this," he said to Demos, "the amount due you would be the subject of endless litigation. I will offer you a couple of billions in full settlement."

"I will accept it for distribution among the people."

"You shall marry Sapphire."

Here the Princess flung herself into her father's arms.

"The Republic shall be restored to-morrow—

provided—mark me well—provided that I be allowed to carry on my customary business without molestation."

"I have no desire to interfere with your private affairs," said Demos. "Your propositions are acceptable."

"But where do I come in?" questioned the Anarchist.

"O, you?" answered Demos. "Something must be done for you. Despite your atrocious views you have been of real service to me and to the people. You shall have a million."

"And you shall have me!" cried Aurea.

"A million!" roared Bill. "Thunder and lightning! With a million I can no longer be an Anarchist!"

"And with me you must become clean and shave those hideous whiskers," said Aurea.

Porker and the Secretaries entered.

"Gentlemen," said the Emperor, "to-morrow I abdicate the throne. The financial Empire will terminate—the Republic will be restored."

Porker fainted. The Secretaries caught him as he fell.

"Carry him out," said the Emperor, "I'll teach you folks to bull the markets against me."

Without a word they went, dragging the limp

form of the Swineherd after them. This cool assumption of their antagonism was too much for them. They did not even dare to reproach him.

"I must ask to be left alone," he said. "I have a great deal to do before morning."

They left him and he fell to work calmly and methodically. There would be no hesitation on his part. Empires might fall, fortunes be shattered, but he would walk his imperial way unscathed, impassive, so long as money held out and men and things were at the auction block.

CHAPTER XIX.

What American heart does not swell at the mention of the First of August? Not even the Fourth of July is more endowed with glory.

The first memorable First, that of 1950, was born amid the flare of lightning and the rattle of thunder, but by noon the storm had spent its force and sunny skies smiled down on Washington.

From early dawn great fleets of airships had been landing passengers in the capital until five millions were gathered within its borders. This mighty army, impressed with the teachings of Demos, had come to demand liberty. Very few were aware of the part Vangold had played in this continental drama. The vast majority were filled with a sincere desire to assert American manhood and throw off the yoke of money. Gathered in orderly ranks they centered about the Capitol, where imperial Congress was sitting, hastily summoned by the Emperor. No Nobles were in the immense crowd. Anarchists, also, were conspicuous by their absence. It was an as-

semblage of the people, with farmers and artisans as the dominant elements. Called to order as a mass meeting, various speeches were made, which by phonographic repetition were audible to all. A resolution was finally passed calling upon the Emperor, in the name of the people, to resign his office, and another, calling upon the Congress to dissolve. There were no threats, no reproaches. Nothing could be more majestic than this temperate expression of the popular will. The spirit of this proud people, so long enthralled in sordid chains, had awakened from its trance at the call of an earnest voice—with no apparent effort the bonds were burst asunder, as at the stretch of giant limbs. Men spoke again of Washington and Lincoln and forgot Vangold.

Within the Capitol Imperial Congress sat quaking with fear. Vangold himself presided in full regalia. Upon his right, a seat had been provided for Demos, who was thus acknowledged as the Ambassador of the nation to its self-imposed rulers.

It was noticed that messengers kept bringing telegrams to the Emperor and that however important the business on hand might be, he stopped to read them. Whatever they referred to nothing

could be read in his face which, as usual, defied scrutiny.

Porker had plucked up spirit to present a resolution calling upon the "mob" to disperse. The Emperor blandly called for a seconder, but no one responded and the resolution fell still-born.

"Gentlemen," said the Emperor, "as men of property you must agree with me that anything is preferable to national disorder. Personally I care nothing for the pomp of office which has always been a burden to me, taking up more of my time than I could well afford, and I shall be glad to accommodate the people by resigning if they so wish it. My advice to all of you is to get in out of the wet.

"For office we probably care as little as you," said Porker, "but how about the markets? Your abdication will be demoralizing."

A chorus of indignant approbation greeted this speech.

"Such of us as are on the wrong side will have to suffer," replied Vangold, placidly, "it is the fortune of war, as we all know."

"But what side are you on?" was shouted at him all over the Chamber.

"I am on the Vangold side."

The reply was sphynx-like. Men looked at

each other still in doubt. Was he with them or against them? If the former there was still hope—if the latter——

The committee from the mass-meeting entered the hall. It was observed that they kept on their hats. Their spokesman read the first resolution.

"Gentlemen," said the Emperor, "I cheerfully comply with the wish of my countrymen. I will shortly step outside and publicly abdicate. You will kindly furnish a notary, at your own expense, to attest my deed. I think that is fair."

The second resolution was then read.

"Gentlemen," said the Emperor, addressing the Congress, "you have heard the wish of the people. Is it your pleasure to dissolve?"

An angry debate ensued. Porker and his immediate followers were for holding on at any cost. The mass-meeting was called a put-up job. Dark hints and inuendoes, aimed at the Emperor, flew about the Chamber, to which Vangold was entirely indifferent. He was getting telegrams now at the rate of about ten a minute. Leaning over to Demos, he whispered, gaily, "Son-in-law, the panic has started."

Demos jumped to his feet.

"Brawling fools," he cried, "for what are you striving? To keep your detestable wealth, the

spoil of the people? Even while you wrangle it is taking wings unto itself—yea, it is melting at the breath of Panic."

This terrible word, hurled into the midst of their debate, struck the Nobles speechless. Telegrams for Porker and others began to come in. The awful news spread quickly and they scurried out of the Chamber, not, however, until a motion had been put to dissolve, which in the absence of any dissentient vote, Vangold declared carried. It must be recorded, though, that no affirmative vote was cast.

The committee returned to the mass-meeting to report success and await the imperial appearance.

Left alone with Demos, Vangold explained to him that the outer shell of the capitol was his—Vangold's—personal property and that it was easily removable. It was wired all over inside and connected with a dynamo. At the touch of a button it would fold up and disappear in layers. As it was very valuable, Vangold said he could not afford to let it remain. Demos suggested that he touch the button at the close of his speech of abdication, adding that it would be a fitting and poetic termination of the ceremony, to which the monarch agreed.

More telegrams came in.

"The way the markets are going I shall be able to buy up your entire Republic before to-morrow night," remarked the Emperor.

"I am sorry to hear it. A social system that allows such accumulations is all wrong."

"Tut, tut, my boy! When you are as old as I am, you will know better. Besides, it will all be Sapphire's some day."

"Then it will all go back to the people."

"To be in turn re-gathered by some imitator of myself."

"There must be a way out of it," concluded Demos.

"Find it, if you can. But at present find Sapphire and let us play our parts."

Demos entered the Emperor's room behind the Chamber, where Sapphire, Aurea and the Anarchist were waiting. Bill was washed and shaven and had on clean clothes. The transformation was startling. Though still horribly ugly, he now showed signs of possible respectability. Time might yet make him a decent member of society. Aurea clung to his arm affectionately, quite proud of the change for the better.

Following the Emperor, the little party went out upon the steps of the capitol. The monarch was received in silence, but mighty cheers arose

for Demos and the Princess. No one recognized Bill.

The Emperor spoke:

"Citizens—For a year I have transacted business as your Emperor and I will say, frankly, it has been a paying job. But it has also been a risky job and I am not sorry to retire from duty. My books of account I leave for public inspection—you will find all transactions accurately set forth. I am afraid you won't find things much cheaper after I'm gone, though I suppose cheapness is what you are after. But that is your affair, not mine. I shall continue private business at the old stand and solicit your patronage, pledging myself to do as well by you as any of my competitors—perhaps a little better, as I shall have some advantage in the matter of capital. It may interest you to learn that my daughter is going to marry your young leader, Demos, who I hope will develop into a steady man of business. If he doesn't it will not be for lack of example. I now take off my crown, which I shall keep, because I paid for it, and I lay down my sceptre, which I shall leave, because it is public property, and I declare the American Empire terminated. You will attend yourselves to the necessary forms for the re-establishment of the Republic. As a pri-

vate citizen, I tender you my services. I am quite an expert in reorganization."

He stopped. Not a sound was heard in reply. He smiled and said to Demos in a low voice, "Don't mistake that canaille for patriots. All I have to do is to raise my price a little and I can buy them back in a week."

"I don't believe it."

Vangold shrugged his shoulders and touched the button of the dynamo. The outer shell of the capitol, from the statue at the top, began to fold up and sink down. A muffled sound like a sigh, swept over the countless throng as the old capitol, white and virginal, came into view, with Liberty crowning the dome. The imperial flags fluttered down, and over the historic pile rose the bright flag of freedom, the glorious Stars and Stripes.

A great cry rose from the multitude. "Old Glory! Old Glory!" they shouted. Men wept and danced as if crazy at the sight of their beloved banner.

"There is my answer to you," said Demos to the ex-Emperor, and his heart throbbed with love for the people. He lifted his hand for silence. He bared his head and bowed to the flag. Then he spoke:

"O, beautiful banner of the free that leaped to

life amid the roar of battle! Emblem of liberty for all mankind! Long didst thou float above storm and strife through primeval forest and savage wilderness, till thou wast hailed of all a Nation's flag! Under thy shining folds what mighty throngs marched westward in the peaceful conquest of a continent, their arms the axe and plough, their faith that all men are born free and equal. Yet hast thou waved over other scenes—scenes of wild war, where brother fought with brother, when thou didst ride on high the hope of freemen. And the glory of the victor was equalled only by the valor of the vanquished, and they who were conquered learned to love thee with a love stronger than of old, so gracious is thy presence, so benign thy meaning. And thou hast fronted foreign foes and brought liberty to the oppressed. Flag of freedom! flag of justice! flag of peace! flag of love! may thy stars forever shine in the vault of nations with the light of hope! may thy stripes forever blaze as sun-rays, kindling the fires of liberty to imperishable life!"

His voice died away amid the breathless silence of the listening throng. Then came such cheers as were never heard before. They seized him and lifted him upon their shoulders. "Come, my darling!" he cried to Sapphire, and in a moment

she was placed by his side. Down the great avenue they carried him and men fought for the privilege of touching his hand or his garments because of his worship of the flag and his love of Liberty. It was evening before they would let him go. At last he found himself alone with Sapphire, in the ex-palace.

"O, how proud I am of my hero!" she said.

"A man is just as much of a hero," he replied, "as the woman he loves will let him be."

Vangold came in.

"Accept my congratulations," said the ex-Emperor. "Your people will come higher than I thought."

EPILOGUE.

About a week after the events recorded in this veracious chronicle, an airship hung motionless at a great height above a spot on Jones River, Alaska. Its occupants were Demos and Sapphire. It was a little past nineteen o'clock. At twelve o'clock they had been married in Washington. For some hours they had idled over the continent at an altitude far above the usual routes, so that they might be completely alone.

She was all in white, as on the day when first he saw her, but no jewels hid the beauty of her arms and bosom. Her short curls still gave her an air of piquancy which contrasted oddly with a certain gracious submissiveness, even timidity, which was quite new to her.

Demos looked in vain for the royal maiden who had so often awed him. Sapphire was surprised to find her rough lover very gentle and shy. The fact is both were a little embarrassed.

Sometimes he would stop the airship and kneel softly at her feet and fold his arms about her,

but as she always remained passive and even seemed to shrink away from him he would quickly arise with a remark about the weather or some other exciting topic. Then they would sit silent, side by side, watching the immense blue arch of heaven, over which white fleecy clouds languidly drifted, melting as they passed the sun. Then he would start the ship and take a whirl of a few thousand miles, but always at a height where none would meet them, and from which the earth looked curved.

At times they would try ordinary conversation.

"I hope Aurea will be happy," she would say.

"Yes—but he is so repulsive."

"It doesn't matter if she loves him."

"Doesn't it? How do you know?"

For answer a look that made him giddy.

Or again:

"How awfully rich Papa must be."

"Yes."

"Almost all the old Nobles are bankrupt."

"I'm glad of it."

"Mr. Porker is going to live with his daughter."

"Of course. On the Anarchist's million."

"And those poor members of the Cabinet; they've started a retail grocery store."

"They will sand their sugar."

The fact that these attempted conversations told nothing new to either of them is proof positive that they were the merest shams. Indeed Demos was thinking all the time, "How beautiful she is! But why so cold?" And Sapphire was thinking, "He used not to be so distant." But neither was deluded by the thought.

He was to show her the spot where the vision of her face had first apeared to him, but he wished to wait till night that the scene might be exactly reproduced. So they loitered in the aerial solitudes which not even a bird invaded, alone in the heart of vast and soundless space. At last the sun slid down behind the far Pacific, which appeared to them as a bluish convex, devoid of motion. An immense fan of golden rays followed the sun's disappearance, fading to yellow and then to purple, vanishing gradually till no shadow of light remained, and darkness covered the earth. Overhead the stars grew luminous. It was night.

Speechless with expectant joy, Demos looked at Sapphire. "Come," he whispered. She went to him and wound her arms about his neck and he clasped her to him, thrilled with devouring

love and fervent thankfulness. "Let us descend," he said.

The airship dropped down and they alighted on the bank of the river.

"My home," said Demos, pointing out a log cabin, scarce visible in the faint starlight. "Here, on such a night as this, the vision of your face first smiled on me."

"It was no vision, love," she answered; "in some strange, hypnotic way, to us unknown, you saw myself."

"What matters it? That I have found you is enough."

He showed her his childish haunts and they stood reverently by the grave of his parents. Then they wandered hand-in-hand along the river shore.

"Darling," he murmured, "it grows late. Shall we return to the capital?"

"Why not stay here?" she shyly replied.

"Here?"

"O, can't you understand?" she cried. "There is no spot on earth so dear to me as this."

He led her to the cabin and they entered, closing the door behind them.

Outside the river murmured and the stars shone as if nothing particular were going on.

Good bye, dear lovers. Now must we part. Never again will such a sweet night glow for you. We will borrow your airship and fly away, as we know you would have us do, leaving to you the old log-cabin, glorified by your gracious presence into a Holy Temple of Love.

THE END.

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